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## AFTER THE POLL.

The election is over and the result has left each of the aspirants to governmental power faced with a situation probably unique in our political history. Of the three parties—Conservative, Liberal and Labour—not one has a majority over the rest.

The writhings and squirmings of the different groups, in the endeavour to find a way out of the difficulty, enlivens the dullness of our lives.

Immediately after the election the official papers of the different parties united in the view that of course Mr. Baldwin would resign, as his main proposals for dealing with the unemployment, trade stagnation, and the Ruhr, had been turned down by a majority of those voting.

The *Observer*, a supporter of Baldwin, lays the defeat of the government at the door of a "Trust-controlled Press." In its issue of 9th December, Garvin complains that the Unionists were deprived of their chief resort at previous elections, the popular newspapers. This is a peculiar admission, particularly for a paper that has the Astor millions behind it. This is equivalent to admitting that the interests behind the Trust-controlled Press swept the Unionists into power, and have now swept them out of power!

The same issue of the paper uses up considerable space to prove that there is no point in Mr. Baldwin retaining office until kicked out, that the obvious policy is for him to hand in his resignation immediately and go into opposition.

Mr. Baldwin, however, has declined to oblige either friends or foes, and proposes

retaining his position. This has destroyed the beautiful Unionist and Liberal schemes of "sympathetic opposition."

The *Observer* promised the Labour Party or Liberals, whichever took office, a sympathetic assistance in the carrying out of certain general proposals for dealing with unemployment, Russia and the Ruhr. It finally recommended that the Liberals should take over the government because, as they, with the assistance of the Trust Press, had made the mess, they should be left to clear it up.

The Liberals, however, are not anxious for office; there are too many reasons at present, from the capitalist standpoint, in favour of letting the Labour Party take over office.

Writing of the Labour Party the *Daily News*, Dec. 10th, 1923 says:—

One of its chief claims to national confidence is the way in which, under its present leadership, it has rallied elements which might have drifted into disruption and dangerous discontent to the support of constitutional changes to be attained by constitutional means. To pretend otherwise is merely to obstruct this laudable and valuable service.

For either Liberals or Labour men, on the other hand, to contemplate a fresh dissolution now, with the tariff issue eliminated, would be a piece of unspeakable folly, fatally destructive of the reputation of those guilty of it for sanity and common sense. The only possible course open to them is such a degree of co-operation between them as shall keep this Parliament with its progressive majority in being for the enactment of the wide range of social and political reforms on which they are agreed.

So spoke the Liberal journal, but the Unionists spoke in an even more amiable way to the Labour Party.



The *Observer* (9th Dec., 1923) had the following:—

There is not the smallest fear of a capital levy, or of any other proposal of Marxian Socialism. In these circumstances, the majority of Unionists would prefer to see the Labour party in office during the six months of transition between now and another general election. The extraordinary thing is the growth of personal sympathy between Unionists and Labour. Unionists recognise that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald from his own point of view has made a fair and decent fight. If he were sent for by the King and took office, Unionists would be prepared to give him every facility for dealing with the Budget and routine business. He might propose a new electoral law. In the Unionist Party there is no fear of it. It is bound to come. Unionists stand to gain by the transferable vote more than any other party.

The *Observer* gave the Labour Party a further suggestion. It may be remembered that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald declared a short time ago that the Labour Party's aim was to develop the resources of this country. The *Observer* has met this view by pointing out:—

What this country requires above all is cheaper power and cheaper transport. (9th December, 1923.)

This cheaper power is to be provided by the use of coal for generating electricity, and the application of electricity as far as possible to means of transport.

The *Observer* further points out:—

Nothing like a wrecking policy on the part of Labour is possible, if the leader of the Labour Party were consulted by the Sovereign, it would be an historic but not an alarming event. (9th December, 1923.)

How has the Labour Party met the offer of this olive branch?

In the first place there have been assurances of no coalition or agreements with Liberals or Tories. Those who remember the times when the Labour voted against their own amendments to save Liberal governments from defeat will not give serious attention to the "no coalition" attitude.

However, fierce protestations are often but the prelude to an inclination to negotiate. But a suggestion of the way the Labour Party would meet the situation was given in the *New Leader* on the 7th December (before the secret of the poll was revealed) which harmonises with the Liberal and Unionist view given above:—

The reform of our grotesque electoral system is necessary for the restoration of honest politics.

The problems of the moment are too great for tactics of wrecking or negation. We should certainly not refuse in the lobbies a discriminating support to a minority government, so long as it was realising ideas common to both our programmes. (Italics ours.)

The nearness of Labour to Liberals is suggested by the following quotation from the same issue of the *New Leader*:—

In some constituencies, where Liberals are strongly attached to Free Trade, it is probable that some of them have voted for Labour in the absence of a Liberal candidate,

and, we may add, the same is probable in the absence of a Unionist candidate.

After the Labour Party's victory at the polls they found themselves in a dilemma. The *New Leader* (7th Dec.) stated:—

If Labour had a chance, it is not in the Ruhr that it would begin to save the Ruhr. It would recognise Russia. It would stop the fortification of Singapore. It might offer to demilitarise the Dardanelles and the Baltic. It might give Cyprus to Greece. It would quit the oil wells of Mosul. It would make India a Dominion and lift the yoke from Egypt.

There is a more or less definite statement of things it might do and things it would do. Now that Labour looks like having a "chance," what is the position? The boot is now on the other leg, and they frankly admit that they don't know what to do. Various views of the situation are put forward by different writers in the *New Leader* (14th Dec.). The following lengthy extracts from the editorial article by the *New Leader's* £1,000 a year editor may be useful for present and future reference:—

We are facing one of those situations which admit of no ideal solution. Any proposal which any section puts forward can be riddled with destructive criticism. Government by coalition is an evil which the party rightly and unanimously rejects. Government by minority is no less an evil. An immediate election might be fatal to the party which precipitated it. It is in the last degree unlikely that at this stage any Liberal-Tory combination will be formed. It is theoretically open to us to allow the Baldwin Cabinet to retain office on terms; but this solution would expose us to grave misunderstanding. To allow the Liberals to take office would be interpreted as a confession of our own incapacity.

For any wide and comprehensive programme it will not suffice that Liberals should refrain from Votes of No Confidence. We must be able to reckon on a measure of goodwill. It is easy to say that we contemplate no arrangements. Face to face with Liberals, side by side with them, our Party would have to realise that they too have their point of view, their interests that must be considered. We shall be every hour at their mercy.

To talk of ignoring the Liberals and refusing any understanding with them seems to me difficult, if we are contemplating as much as six or eight months of office. If we are going to walk down this long road we should have to carry them with us, halting, limping and breathless perhaps, but not jostling or tripping. With any weighty programme on our backs we should soon find ourselves consciously drafting our Bills with the fear of Mr. Asquith before our eyes. Would he object to this or jib at that? Then out it must go.

But the moment one faces public works, to say nothing of any increase in the dole, then money must be found. An adequate housing scheme cannot be cheap. Apart from unemployment and housing, we have denounced the cruel economies of past Governments on education, child welfare and every social service. We have given pledges as to the removal of the thrift restriction on old-age pensions and the abolition of duties on sugar and tea.

Oh! Those awful pledges! How some of the Labour members must curse themselves for their election pledges. Without these pledges and their campaign against "broken pledges" the situation would be much easier.

We have not forgotten our own campaign for the Levy. Are we going to undertake to compose a Budget without it? The alternative would be a tremendous addition to the unpopular income tax, which the Liberal Party would not assist us to vote.

Evidently one of the pledges must go; but which? That is the question. According to the Labour programme the Levy was to provide the means to carry out certain reforms which were alleged to be of advantage to the workers. In fact, it was a corner stone of their programme. Now that they have secured their "chance," the Levy is beginning to retreat into the distance along with most of their other "pledges."

The struggle with France, however, would be no easier for us than for our predecessors—indeed, the inclination of M. Poincaré would be to treat us as an ephemeral administration, a passing episode in the life of Europe. America would regard us as "radicals," the sort of people whom the Ku-Klux-Klan would deal with, if we lived beneath the statue of Liberty. Nor could events march swiftly. We should aim at a conference at least as wide as that which General Smuts proposed; but would it be wise to call it before the French general election decides in May whether M. Poincaré is still the Dictator of Europe? One hope I see, and only one, for a conference. It is that we should first create, before it meets, an atmosphere of expectation throughout the world.

The recognition of Russia and the symbol of Singapore would help. Dare we next make Egypt

truly "independent" by withdrawing the British garrison from Cairo? What if we were to give Greek Cyprus to the Greek motherland, or offer to discuss the demilitarisation of the Black Sea? When we had relaxed our hold on the oil-wells of Mosul, we might with less inward hesitation invite M. Poincaré to quit the coalfield of the Ruhr. By such calculated acts we should rally the peoples behind us, and might without hypocrisy organise at a conference moral pressure against French militarism. But we should fail, as Mr. Wilson failed, and for the same reason, if our Parliament, like his Senate, were hostile. Everything once more turns on our relations with the Liberals; would they, sitting in the shadow, help us to face the Tory assaults on such a policy? We cannot accept their alliance. It follows that we must limit our own ambitions.

On paper, for months before the election, the above matters were easily settled by airy statements—and "moral" flourishes. But now the situation has changed! "Evolution"—blessed word!

Brailsford winds up his "its" and "mights" as follows—with a mournful remark on the pre-election programmes and speeches:—

By April the problem of the Budget would overtake us, and we should compromise our own case if we undertook to solve it without a capital levy. The danger before us leaps out from some of the extensive programmes which have already appeared in Labour speeches and in print. If we set our hopes on a big agenda, if we talk even of six or eight months of office, then inevitably we shall drift into the fatal attitude of buying it on the only possible terms—by arrangement with Liberals, which would obscure our Socialist policy, compromise our independence, and make us in the end mere caretakers of a capitalist and Imperial system. (Italics ours.)

In the same issue of the *New Leader* as that from which we have just quoted, Clifford Allen, Sidney Webb, Pethick Lawrence, and Ramsay MacDonald contribute articles on the situation.

Clifford Allen says:—

We must only take office with a definite and publicly declared design, namely, that we will form a purely temporary and emergency Government for a few months to deal with two or three selected urgent questions, such as unemployment and the European chaos. The War Debt could be submitted to a Commission.

This is certainly a handy way out of the Capital Levy difficulty. But the Capital Levy was to provide the means for dealing with unemployment. How then are they to raise the necessary funds? And what about "reduced taxation"?

Sidney Webb informs us that:—

I am quite sure that we need fear no bias or dislike at the Palace that would cause the Labour Party to be treated with any unfairness.



With this view we could hardly disagree in view of the fact that Labour members have so frequently had their knees under the same mahogany as Royalty!

Webb joins the chorus of mourners and points out:—

the plain impossibility of passing into law in this Parliament any large and contentions measures.

Pethick Lawrence states that he addressed "a meeting of business men, most of whom were Liberals or Conservatives, to a discussion limited to the Capital Levy" and heard privately afterwards:—

that many of them entirely changed their view as to what the Levy was, and not a few actually voted Labour for the first time on this is alone.

Under the heading "Sacrificing Luxuries" he is careful to point out:—

In this it is essential to make it clear that we are not animated by hostility to any section or class of the community. We are merely calling for a sacrifice on the part of the wealthy to meet a national emergency.

Finally Ramsay MacDonald sums up the difficulties as follows:—

At times it is as necessary to preserve the forms of government as to produce legislative changes, even when the latter are very pressing. Can the Labour Party devise a policy which would enable it to do some useful and urgent work, like helping to settle Europe and increase the provision for dealing with unemployment, without compromise in any shape or form?

Having put the question, one would expect MacDonald, as the leading figure in the Labour Party, to give us an answer. But this is all he has to say:—

That is the difficult problem which we have to face now, and I venture to ask our supporters in the country to help us with their trust.

A very satisfying answer, is it not? Note, too, the slimy appeal for "trust," proving once more how leaders depend upon a sheep-like following.

The plain fact of the situation is that the Labour Party is in a fix. It is composed of individuals with a hotch potch of ideas and has been voted into its present position by individuals similarly placed. Its fundamental weaknesses have placed it in the dilemma. It has been voted to Parliament on a vote catching programme and not on fundamental questions. If it does not justify these vote catching pledges it will lose a good deal of the support so far given. Had the Labour group been voted

in on a Socialist programme by class-conscious workers, the voters would have understood the position themselves; they would have defined the path to be followed; there would have been no dilemma.

### SOCIALISM AND ETHICS.

"Pity for poverty, enthusiasm for equality and freedom, recognition of social injustice and a desire to remove it, is not socialism. Condemnation of wealth and respect for poverty, such as we find in Christianity and other religions, is not socialism. The communism of early times, as it was before the existence of private property, and as it has at all times and among all peoples been the elusive dream of some enthusiasts, is not socialism. The forcible equalisation advocated by the followers of Babœuf, the so-called equalitarians, is not socialism.

In all these appearances there is lacking the real foundation of capitalist society with its class antagonisms. Modern socialism is the child of capitalist society and its class antagonisms. Without these it could not be. Socialism and ethics are two separate things. This fact must be kept in mind.

Whoever conceives of socialism in the sense of a sentimental philanthropic striving after human equality, with no idea of the existence of capitalist society, is no socialist in the sense of the class struggle, without which modern socialism is unthinkable... Whoever has come to a full consciousness of the nature of capitalist society and the foundation of modern socialism, knows also that a socialist movement that leaves the basis of the class struggle may be anything else, but it is not socialism."

WILHELM LIEBKNECHT.

(Page 34. No Compromise, no Political Trading.)

### THE REWARD OF GENIUS.

"New York, Saturday. — Johannes Sophus Gelert, the famous sculptor, attempted to commit suicide at the Danish Home for the Aged. He slashed his throat with a razor, but will probably recover."

"He is without friends and practically penniless, and owing to creeping paralysis was unable to continue working.—Reuter."

### TOM MANN RETRACTS!

For years Tom Mann has been held up to public admiration as the sturdy champion of the General Strike as the only means by which the workers can achieve their emancipation. He has written much rubbish on the subject, and he has poured much scorn upon those who pointed out that the working class must either capture the political machinery or give up all hope of getting out of wage slavery. But history will have its little joke! Tom Mann has thrown up the sponge—the pillar of fire was after all only a pillar of smoke.

Enshrined in the columns of *The Communist*, Sydney (17/11/1922), the official organ of the Communist Party of Australia, is the renunciation. Here is what he wrote:

"Now, however, the experience of the war and after the war has shown conclusively that we can no longer think simply of an industrial struggle, and industrial organisation is not enough. Whatever is done by industrial organisation, the organised State machine will continue to function, and will beyond question be used by the plutocracy in any and every available form against the workers. The dominant ruling capitalist class, the plutocracy, have complete control of that highly efficient machine for class purposes; the interests of the community are ever secondary to the maintenance of power by the master class, and that machine will continue to be theirs until it is wrested from them by the workers. . . . The most sanguine amongst us, as believers in the power of industrial organisation, are compelled by facts and experience to realise that the State institution in the hands of the master is not merely a danger to our success, but makes our success impossible no matter how perfectly we organise in our respective industries."

The article from which the above is taken is entitled "Syndicalism, Communism, and Revolution: An Answer to the Reformists of Australia and elsewhere."

Another fallen idol! Working men, here is one of your trusted leaders—one who has invited you to the shambles many a time. But what is this?

"In a rousing speech, Mr. Mann advocated the policy of the general strike as the 'only means of bringing the boss class to its knees.'"

"Do I advocate," he asked, "the killing of anyone? Nay, all you need do is to fold your arms, go to bed if you like, and three days would be sufficient. No strike pay would be required." (*Daily Herald*, 11/4/1923).

Notice that he advocates the "General Strike" as the "only means." Perhaps, you think, Tom Mann is merely a shameless turncoat. He is not, he is an opportunist—searching for opportunities to the advantage

of one Thomas Mann. For example, in spite of the above, he went to Scotland to assist Walton Newbold's candidature for Parliament. Perhaps that partly accounts for Newbold's failure to "get in"!

One of the most enthusiastic election meetings ever held in Motherwell was that addressed by Walton Newbold and Tom Mann, in the Pavilion Picture House, on Tuesday evening. . . . Newbold and Mann were in splendid form, especially Mann, who gripped the big audience right away, and the cheering at the conclusion of his rousing speech could be heard all over the district. (*The Workers' Weekly*, 7th December, 1923.)

What do you think of him? The chameleon is constant compared with him!

They are all the same, these precious leaders. They change their tune with the change in their interests. Their object is to obtain pelf and place.

Have done with leaders. Direct your own movements, and let leaders go beg for their bread.

GILMAC.

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## RATES, AND RATES OF WAGES.

The National Council of the Independent Labour Party have issued a manifesto entitled "How to deal with the rates; what a Socialist Government would do."—*New Leader*, October 19th, 1923. In a final paragraph they say:—

Socialism approaches the subject of rates from a new point of view. To-day most people denounce rates as an imposition. To-morrow they must look upon them as a first-class investment; as a method of providing cheap communal services, and, therefore, a means of increasing real wages; as a protection against slums, diseases and dirt; as a guarantee of decent education for their children; as a contribution towards a healthy and fully developed community.

This view is neither new nor socialistic. The Progressive Party have claimed it as their policy, in and out of office, for many years, while never once making the dishonest claim that it was socialistic. The constitution of the I.L.P. is not socialistic and no fundamental principles have ever been laid down by that party that could be described as the necessary basis of the socialist movement.

The National Council speaks for the I.L.P. It thinks for the I.L.P., reproaches the workers for their apathy and indifference, yet up till the present moment has never once set out a simple straightforward statement outlining the workers' position in modern society, the cause of the evils from which they suffer, the line of action they must follow to remove them and the principles upon which society must be established for that purpose.

The I.L.P. in the course of its propaganda completely ignores the facts of vital importance to the workers if they are to consider fully any public question from their own point of view as workers: The class ownership of the means of wealth-production, the consequent slavery of those who do not participate in this ownership; the antagonism of interests between these two classes and the consequent struggle between them, which can only end in favour of the workers when the latter take over the means of wealth-production and control them democratically for the purpose of satisfying all their needs.

These are the vital and indispensable facts for the workers to bear in mind when considering any question of political or industrial interest. Any party that claims

to represent the workers should base its antagonism to capitalist governments on these principles. It is not sufficient that it should be opposed to both Tory and Liberal. It is possible to oppose both these parties on purely capitalist grounds and for purely capitalist reasons without being socialist.

If the workers are to come to a right conclusion on the rates question, they must first understand clearly their class position and how they are enslaved by the capitalist class. Wage-slavery is different in form from all preceding systems. It is more effective in binding the worker to his task while at the same time conceding him the freedom to leave it. How this can be is easily seen without much knowledge of economics. Every worker is free to leave an employer but his physical needs compel him to find another. To use an economic phrase, he is compelled to sell his labour-power in order to obtain the necessities of life. His wage is the price of his labour-power.

In their general propaganda the I.L.P. denounce the capitalists for treating the workers as mere commodities. As human beings they say that the workers have rights above material commodities. The facts are, however, that the workers themselves are not commodities, nor are they treated as such by their masters. Every worker is the undisputed owner of his labour-power. He can sell it to any capitalist who is willing to buy. He sells it for stipulated periods and can discontinue the sale by giving notice according to the terms agreed upon. These are the extent of the workers' rights, his actual position.

Moreover, it is all that they claim. Nor does the I.L.P. claim any higher rights. The right to work. The right to a living wage, with or without work, is their latest cry; concede them so much: How is it possible for the workers to pay rates while their share of the wealth they produce is a living wage? How may they consider themselves ratepayers when their wages are subject to modifications with changes in the cost of living?

Let the National Council carry out its programme, municipalising supplies and services in order that the prices of necessities may be reduced, and what happens? Cost of living falls and wages, the price of labour-power, follows; with greater certainty, too, because the cheapening of sup-

plies and services is effected by labour-saving methods; in other words, by increasing the number of unemployed. If wages always fall for the bulk of the workers, when the cost of living falls, the workers would not benefit if rates were entirely abolished. Nor would the fact that their wages fell prove that they previously paid rates. On the contrary, it would go to show that the capitalist paid them, by the mere fact that he reduced wages to that extent. The result for the workers being a living wage based upon the same standard as before the reduction in rates took place.

Commodities are always subject to changes and fluctuations in price. The price of a commodity changes under three sets of conditions: when it is produced with a smaller or greater expenditure of labour-power; when supply and demand are unequal, and when the material of which money is made can be produced with a smaller or greater expenditure of labour-power. Labour-power is a commodity and subject to fluctuations in price under all three sets of conditions.

During the few years immediately preceding the war, wages were affected by the last named condition. Through improved methods of gold-production the sovereign bought less of the necessities of life, and as a consequence the workers were compelled to struggle for higher wages. During the war prices rose still higher, with the result that capitalists were compelled to raise wages in order to avoid widespread discontent through serious depression of the workers' standard of living. How the cost of living more than doubled during that period is common knowledge, but the workers were in a favourable position to enforce a rise, though never as a whole to the new level of prices, because there was little or no unemployment. The demand for labour-power was exceptional.

Since the war new sliding scales have been introduced into a number of industries. Cost of living figures have been systematically used by employers in a continuous effort to "get back to pre-war standards." The fact ignored by most people is that the standard of living for the workers to-day is approximately the same as it was in 1914. The money name of the amount of necessities they obtain in a week has risen, but if anything, their standard of living has slightly fallen.

The policy of employers to-day is to keep before the workers and their leaders on the industrial field these cost of living figures. They form the plea and the reason for every reduction of wages enforced. A living wage is the demand of trade unionists; their leaders dispute the figures but never debate the principle. Why then does the National Council confuse the workers' minds with questions that do not concern them?

By their schemes of municipal ownership and production they propose to reduce the cost of living while making the workers more efficient. A reduction in the cost of living means a reduction in wages that need not mean a reduction in the standard of living. An increase in general efficiency, however, would intensify competition and increase unemployment. In operation their policy would be as harmful to the workers as its propaganda is confusing. F. F.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST IN THE ELECTION.

Though it is a matter of minor importance, I must confess to a feeling of unholy glee at seeing that Winston Churchill failed again.

Ben Tillet, the strike breaker, succeeded in crawling into Parliament along with J. Sexton, a fitting chum.

Frank Hodges, who assisted to defeat the railwaymen in 1921, is still climbing; he is now a Labour M.P.

Col. John Ward, a deserter from the Labour Party, put up as an Independent against a Labour candidate and just managed to squeeze in.

A few who were one time "sturdy Democrats" tried a change of party but were too late—they backed the wrong horse. Among these were C. H. Roberts, Victor Fisher, and J. A. Seddon.

G. H. Roberts, Labour Party representative in the Coalition Government, put up as a Conservative but was ousted.

Victor Fisher, a one-time member of the Social Democratic Party and friend of H. M. Hyndman, put up as a Conservative and failed to get in.

J. A. Seddon was another Labour misleader who put up as a Conservative and failed to get in.

Fellow workers, take note of the above and refrain from trusting in Leaders. Trust in yourselves in future and changes of policy by Leaders will work you no harm.

PUNCHINELLO.



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Socialist Standard,

JANUARY



1924

## ELECTION- REFLECTIONS.

"Armchair Philosophers" is the phrase that has often been flung at us by the "men of action" when at a loss to meet facts and logical arguments from facts. Well, let us sit back in the armchair for a little while and ponder over the doings of the "men of action."

"Men of action"—the phrase at once brings to mind the Communist Party. "Action" has been the poison gas in that Party's programme for a long time; and in the name of "action" many weird and wonderful antics have been performed.

Not very long ago the Communist Party had difficulty in finding adjectives strong enough with which to belabour Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Party. He who proposed union with the Labour Party was described as a traitor to the working class. But a change has come over the scene. The Communist Party transport us in imagination to Maskelyne and Devant's home of mysteries, where the waving of a wand performs marvels. The wand used by the Communist Party is the "United Front." Here are a few of the marvels it has performed.

In the *Workers Dreadnought* (21st February, 1920) Wm. Gallacher wrote:—

Any support given to Parliamentarism is simply assisting to put power into the hands of our British Scheidemanns and Noskes. Henderson, Clynes and Co. are hopelessly reactionary.

Since then Gallacher has twice contested Dundee as a Parliamentary Candidate on behalf of the Communist Party; and the latter has done all in its power to return the Labour Party candidates to Parliament in the 1922 and the late elections.

During the Caerphilly bye-election of August, 1921, the *Communist*, of August 13th, published on its front page a call to the workers to support Stewart, the Communist candidate. In the course of this front page article they make the following remarks:—

The Labour Party, as it stands, is what its leaders make it—and they will neither lead you into battle nor allow you to lead them.

The leaders who brought about the Triple Alliance disaster, in spite of the splendid solidarity of the rank and file; the leaders who beat back the miners after a three months' death grapple, and did so in contempt of the magnificent defiance embodied in your ballot vote; the leaders who, in industry after industry, accepted reductions and defeat in advance, and with a mere pretence of consulting the rank and file—these, and not the rank and file, constitute the Labour Party as it stands. "The best of men," if he were elected under their auspices, would be paralysed by their vacillation or crippled in the cogs of their controlling machine."

Bearing in mind the last sentence in the above quotation, it is curious to notice that Wm. Paul, a prominent member of the Communist Party, accepted the Labour Party constitution (see *Daily Herald*, November 30th, 1923) and was put forward as Labour Party candidate for the Rusholme Division of Manchester in the recent election. The following quotation from the *Workers' Weekly* (December 7th, 1923), the official organ of the Communist Party of Great Britain, is also both curious and interesting:—

The Labour Party has officially endorsed as its candidates both Comrade Paul, in Rusholme, and Comrade Vaughan, in Bethnal Green. There are now four Communist candidates officially supported by the National Labour Party; while local organisations of the Communist Party are working their utmost for Ramsay MacDonald in Aberavon, Bromley in Barrow, Ernest Hunter, of the I.L.P., in Hackney, J. R. Clynes in Manchester, and in hundreds of other constituencies.

Now contrast the above with the following quotation taken from the *Communist* of September 10th, 1921:—

Are you going on waiting in the streets for something to turn up, or do you want ACTION? IF you are a miner, a docker, or a railwayman, are you happy and proud of your Black Friday leaders? Do you trust and believe in Thomas,

Hodges, Bevan, Williams? Do you feel satisfied with the leaders who betrayed on Black Friday? Do you feel a sense of solidarity with Thomas, Hodges, Bevan, Williams? Will they do your fighting for you? If you think you can lie safely under their warm, protecting wings—well, try it. But the Party calls you if you want ACTION.

In the name of "action" you were asked then to throw over Thomas, Hodges, and Bevan, who had betrayed you. Thomas, Hodges, and Bevan were Labour Party candidates in the recent election, and in the name of solidarity you were asked by the Communist Party to support these traitors in the recent election. The Communist Party then stands self-convicted of betraying the interests of the working class and of supporting the opportunist line of action that has led the workers into so many blind alleys in the past. Such are the "men of action."

## WHERE THE LABOUR PARTY FAILS.

Many are the points on which the Socialist disagrees with the policy of the Labour Party. We have frequent occasion to condemn the actions of its members, and the utterances of its leaders, on the ground that they are opposed to the interests of the workers; but there is one ground of disagreement which is more important than all the others and which, in fact, underlies most of them. Before discussing it let us exclude the minor ones for the purpose of clarifying the issue. Let us assume that the leaders of the Labour Party are men of honesty and integrity, that they possess as much wisdom as it is given to any man to possess, that they sincerely desire to do for the workers all that is humanly possible, and that they are gifted with uncommon singleness of purpose.

Let us also be clear on certain general assumptions, acceptable to them as well as to us. They are that only by the consent of a majority of the workers can any considerable change be made; and that any such change can at least be attempted within the framework of the existing constitution of this country. The workers by capturing Parliament will be able to rebuild society, secured, by their control of the armed forces, against interference from any quarter.

Even on these assumptions it would still be impossible for us to support the Labour

Party, and the reason is that we believe the capitalist system to be the enemy while the Labour Party does not.

One section believes that low wages are the evil, and that the remedy lies in raising them. Another believes that inflation will bring prosperity by stimulating trade, and a third looks to deflation and low prices as their Mecca. Some members want to increase the technical efficiency of production, decrease the costs of producing British goods, and thus capture a larger share of the world's trade; others want to eliminate the middleman to achieve the same object. Just now many hopes are placed on a capital levy to reduce the national debt, and with it, taxation. Some Labour propagandists urge that the state take over the land and the staple industries and run them like the Post Office. Relief schemes for the unemployed; conciliation to obviate strikes; honest government and open diplomacy; bigger old-age pensions and more compensation for injured workmen; state assistance in the building of workers' houses, statutory minimum rates of wages; bounties on the production of corn; heavy death duties and excess profits taxes, and even the limitation of inheritance; these are some of the many suggestions made.

Now it is obvious that these proposals are put forward to meet certain definite evils, and that if they could be isolated and treated by themselves many of them would be of decided benefit to the workers. Other things remaining unchanged it would be good for the workers to have their wages raised; greater efficiency regarded on its merits alone would be most desirable; and nobody would pretend that stoppages of production are in themselves praiseworthy objects of human endeavour. But unfortunately none of these things can be treated on its own merits. We live in a system of society called capitalism, and every proposal, made by whatever party, must be regarded in the light of its effect on the working-class as they exist under capitalism. So regarded, some of these reforms are plainly bad for the workers and good only for the capitalists; such is greater efficiency. Some are of no effect at all. Some are of limited use, but bring inevitable aggravations of other evils; such is a legal minimum wage which leads to the putting off of those who are not able-



bodied and induces the employers to instal machinery to replace hand labour. And all of them are harmful to the degree that they are used to keep your minds off the real problems which face you.

Our attitude is simple and straightforward. We see many great and growing evils from which we, as workers, suffer, and after due examination we see that it is the capitalist organisation of society which is the cause of these evils. We see that poverty, unemployment, war and many other harmful features of the modern world can be abolished only by the establishment of Socialism, which is a new and different social system. In this we differ from the Labour Party.

We see that CAPITALISM is the cause of unemployment; not the wickedness of the capitalists, nor the selfishness and incompetence of their governments; not war nor low wages; not their foreign policy nor their inactivity at home. We see that the workers are wretchedly housed and badly fed and shoddily clothed and vilely miseducated, because they are poor. We see that they are poor because they are robbed, and they are robbed because the capitalist system is based on robbery. The Labour Party says "let us administer the system, and we will show you that we are fit to govern," but if we are correct, when we say that it is the *system* itself which is at fault it will not matter who *administers* it. It will still be a system of exploitation of one class by another. If it ceases to be this, it will cease to be at all, because that is its nature. A system which is based on the robbery of the workers obviously cannot be made to work out to their benefit.

In the December issue some information was given showing how utterly the Australian Labour governments had failed in their attempts to make capitalism a success from a workers' point of view. Those workers are still exploited and they are still poor: they still suffer from unemployment, and they still cannot get houses. Their position is, in fact, worse than when Labour governments took office, and this is not due to their having been governed by a Labour government but to the continued existence of the capitalist system.

What then do we mean by this term capitalism? I will take the definitions of two anti-socialists, both of them recognised authorities on Economic History.

Sir William Ashley writes:—

By capital the business world has always meant . . . wealth which its owner can employ for the purpose of gain; and by investment we mean . . . the fact that there really exist openings for the use of wealth in directions which will bring an income or "revenue" over and above the return of the sum employed. (*The Economic Organisation of England*, page 79.)

Archdeacon W. Cunningham, D.D., F.B.A., defines it as:—

The fund of wealth which is employed with a view to obtaining an income. (*The Progress of Capitalism in England*, page 20.)

A capitalist then is one who owns capital, and through his ownership receives an income; and the capitalist system is one in which this form of ownership predominates.

Capitalism, therefore, is a system in which the means of producing wealth are privately owned. There have been other systems of private ownership, such as Feudalism and Slavery, but in them the wealth has not taken the form of capital. Before them again there were societies in which there was no private ownership of the means of producing wealth and no exploitation of one class by another. Socialism will mean not only the end of capitalism, but also the end of all private ownership of the means of production and exploitation. Of course, when we talk about common ownership we are only referring to the means of production, like the land and the factories, not houses and clothes and food and things like these.

Capitalist enterprise was a feature of the ancient civilisations round the Mediterranean, but in Western Europe its rise has been quite a recent development.

There are, of course, forms of social organisation which are appropriate to conditions in which capital does not exist at all; the formation of capital implies the existence of money economy. In countries and in circumstances where natural economy prevails, capital is unknown. . . . (Cunningham, page 21.)

Other factors needed for the development of capitalism were the existence of free landless labourers; and the prevalence of buying and selling instead of the production of goods to be consumed by the producer. These clearly had to be preceded by the common use of money.

Cunningham notes the coming in of money in the 14th and 15th centuries and the corresponding break up of "natural economy," which is the name given to

societies in which there are no money transactions.

The change from natural economy which existed at the time of the Conquest, to the capitalist system which had come into complete possession at the beginning of the 19th century, is spread over a period of eight centuries (page 21.)

Now nobody would deny that capitalism brought with it great economic, political and social advantages, but we say that it also brought the seeds of unavoidable evils and conflicts, and that the evils are now so great that only a new and higher system can be of any use. Such a system is Socialism.

Now, remembering our definition, let us examine the system which covers the whole civilised world. We find that some countries are monarchies and some republics; some have free trade and others protection; some have Liberal or Conservative governments and others have Labour or Communist governments; some have much and some only little foreign trade; some have big national debts and heavy taxation and others little of either; yet in one thing they are all alike. In all of them the capitalist economic system prevails. In all of them there is a class of poor people who have no property, and who live by working, and another class of rich property-owners, who live by owning property. The workers get wages or salaries, which they have earned by their labour. It is they who have grown the food, made the clothes and built the houses and factories, and carried goods from one place to another, and it is they who have organised this work and supervised and directed it. On the other hand, the property-owners have received rent, interest and profit without having to labour for it at all. From what source then do their incomes arise? Is it not plain that these people who own the means of production are living on the labour of those who use them to produce wealth?

The issue is somewhat confused, especially in young capitalist countries, by the fact that some employers do work themselves. To the extent then that they do useful work, part of their incomes is earned, but most of them do not work at all, and in any event are not compelled to do so. In our modern huge joint-stock companies the shareholders never come near the factories and workshops. They may live on the

other side of the world, or die, and still the shares would continue to bring in dividends.

We say that it is this private ownership which is at the root of our problems, and we propose that society should take over the means of production and use them, the only sensible suggestion to satisfy the needs of the members of society, instead of allowing a class to make a profit out of their use.

At present we have the workers compelled to ask permission of the owners before they can get to work, and the condition on which permission is granted is that the workers should keep the owners in idle luxury.

And this private ownership has other evil effects besides being a means of robbing the workers.

Over the whole capitalist world we have the workers producing goods of greater value than they receive back as wages, the difference being a surplus for landlords, bankers, and manufacturing capitalists. So that after the workers have spent their wages there is still a great mass of goods in the warehouses which the owners must sell before they can realise their profits, and it is much more than they can possibly consume themselves. It is in this way that unemployment is caused. The people who own the goods want to sell but cannot find buyers, while the workers who want the goods have no money to buy. Production has to be curtailed, and goods are wasted or slowly consumed by the unemployed who live on doles and other forms of relief. Alternatively, capitalist countries are forced to go to war to try to snatch markets from their rivals, and destroy their powers of production. But whether they win or lose, the problem is only aggravated.

This is the capitalist system, and we propose to abolish it. We want to destroy entirely the right of any individual or class to live by privately owning something which society wants to use. We say this results in robbery, and we are out to end it.

But this is not the Labour Party's object; therefore, we are compelled to oppose that party. We do not want to see them running capitalism even if they could do it better than the older parties. Australian Labour governments, in the words of Premier Theodore, went into office to "administer capitalism." We do not want



anyone to administer capitalism; we want to destroy it.

Moreover, we do not believe that any government can make conditions under capitalism good for the workers. Mr. E. J. Holloway, ex-president of the Australian Labour Party, and General Secretary of the Victorian Trades Council, writing on the lessons of the Labour governments, confesses that while they have been able to make

conditions a little better they have reached their limit, and no real or permanent improvement in modern society can be effected unless we begin to bridge over that great gulf which exists between the rich and the poor. . . . This cannot be done unless the Government . . . begin to transfer from private ownership those agencies of wealth production and distribution which produce and distribute socially necessary commodities. (*Labour Magazine*, December, 1923.)

Now no government can attack the property of the capitalists without a mandate, and no Labour government in Australia had such a mandate. Until the workers understand and want socialism, they will never put into power a government able to undertake that great task, and the only alternative to socialism is the continuance of capitalism. But the harm done by the Labour Party is to spread the false idea that there is another solution not involving the abolition of capitalism. This is called "nationalisation," but it is, in fact, merely capitalism in another and worse form. The Labour government compensates the present owners by giving them interest-bearing bonds (5 per cent. bonds are promised to British landowners by the Labour Party) or else they are paid out with money raised by loan. In either event we still have a class living by owning, robbing the wealth producers. We still have the capitalist system, and it is probable that many landowners would actually be better off with a sure 5 per cent. than they are now!

The Labour government would have to pay this interest and make the industries a financial success in competition with home or foreign rivals, and would be forced whether it wished or not, to keep down the worker's standard of living to the general level. Australian Labour governments have to find the agreed rate of interest on loans, and to do this they have had to beat down the wages paid to the workers. Once committed to the task of "administering

capitalism," the choice is between ruin or an increased exploitation of the workers, either by longer hours, harder work, or lower pay. How else can an industry pay dividend to the bond-holders and compete with other capitalist producers. The workers are poor in Queensland because of the tribute levied on industry by the capitalists for whom the Labour government must act as a slave driver.

The Labour Party here also seeks to attain office without a mandate to overthrow capitalism; therefore, we cannot support it. At the recent election the Labour Party's programme contained no reference, explicit or implied, to socialism. When they come into power they will, therefore, be impotent to remedy the worker's poverty or abolish unemployment. The leaders do not promise to abolish profit-making.

It is no part of Labour's policy to establish revolutionary socialism or to confiscate private property.—J. R. Clynes (*Glasgow Evening News*, 4th October, 1923.)

The Labour Party demands:—

nothing more than the nationalisation of the land, mines and essential public services, and this does not carry the Labour Party further than many Radicals, who would vigorously disclaim being socialistic, are prepared to go.—Philip Snowden. (*Manchester Guardian Supplement*, 26th October, 1922.)

Mr. Snowden, in the House of Commons, on March, 20th, 1923, when speaking on the motion condemning the capitalist system, expressly stated that the Labour Party always repudiated confiscation. How can the capitalists be denied the right to live by owning property unless that property is "confiscated"?

J. H. Thomas, in "When Labour Rules" (page 24), states that

Capital will be entitled to some return. He also says that all that we claim is a first charge on industry to the point of a reasonable share in the decencies and comforts—not luxuries, note—of life. . . .

Why the workers, who produce necessities and luxuries alike, should hand over the luxuries to a parasite class Mr. Thomas does not explain.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in "Socialism, Critical and Constructive" (1921, page 196), is quite definitely opposed to the idea of abolishing the right to live by owning.

The right of inheritance is unassailable except in communities based upon pure communism, and for my purpose they need not be considered; but, from a social point of view, the powers of

inheritance might with advantage be strictly limited. (198.)

To limit profits by taxation is no easy matter, but the problem will have to be faced. What, for instance, is to be the basis upon which the legitimate profit is to be calculated? Is it to be the dividend on watered capital, or on capital in economic use? Is it not to be a dividend on capital at all, but a profit on the turnover and trade? (209.)

We say that profit-making is robbery. What then is a *legitimate* rate of profit? And if the members of the Labour Party believe that profit-making is legitimate, should they not cease to denounce the capitalist system, and ought they not to avoid confusion by recognising that their object is not socialism?

Sidney Webb, in his "Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain" (1920), deals with the question, too.

Each owner should receive in compensation the fair market value of that of which he is compulsorily dispossessed. . . . The community will, of course, be saddled with the interest and sinking fund, or the annuity; and will thus, on the face of it, be no wealthier than before; just as the expropriated person will be no poorer, and the aggregate tribute on production levied by ownership no less than before. The object of "socialisation" is "socialisation"—that is to say, the transformation of profit-making enterprise into public service; not the enrichment of the community by confiscation. (page 334.)

It would require all the subtlety of the professorial mind to convince me that the act of socialisation really does mean leaving things as they are.

It is true that Webb goes on to talk about the *ultimate* and *gradual* extinction of living on interest by the power of taxation, but he fails to explain why the capitalists, who will resist confiscation, will submit quietly to the same progress if only it is called by another name. He gives no reason whatever why the workers should—once having attained power—set up a new vested interest, a "rentier" class.

To sum up, therefore, we see that capitalism is the enemy, and that socialism is the only remedy. Socialism necessarily means the denial of the right to live by owning. All who can work must work in order to earn the right to enjoy the products of labour. Socialism can be introduced only by a socialist electorate, and the present owners, as a class, cannot be expected to yield their rights until they must. The Labour Party does not con-

demn the system of living by owning, at best it only proposes to limit the rate of profit. It is not committed to socialism, is not composed of socialists, does not seek election on a socialist programme, and, therefore, whatever the will of those elected, they will be impotent to advance the cause of socialism. Its attempts to patch up an obsolescent system of society will fail, and end in its own undoing. It cannot give the workers that comfort and security which alone can end their discontent, without attacking the foundations of capitalist society. Those who set their leaders the impossible task of solving the insoluble contradictions of capitalism will themselves be responsible for the inevitable disillusionment and betrayal. The issue lies in the hands of the workers. We appeal to your intelligence, confident that soon or late, the brutal pressure of economic forces will compel consideration and acceptance of our case—the case for socialism. H.

## THE CAPITAL LEVY.

### RAMSAY MACDONALD SUPPORTS OUR CASE.

In previous issues we have dealt with the Labour Party's scheme for a levy on Capital to pay off part of the war debt. It was explained why the levy is merely a matter for the consideration of the capitalist class, who have to decide on purely financial grounds whether the levy is advisable in principle, and secondly whether it would be wise to institute it so long after the war and in a period of depression. In the main they decided against it, because, apart from mere prejudice, they were of the opinion that the problems of the capitalist system were not pressing enough to warrant such a difficult measure. Moreover, that section of the capitalists which stands to gain most from it, the financiers, were unable or unwilling to come out vigorously in its support at an election. It was, therefore, from a vote-catching point of view, probably a mistake for the Labour Party, to make it their main plank. But for that they would have received the valuable support of the section of the Conservative Party which centres round the *Observer*. These people believe that two things are needed to maintain Britain in her world position, and to safeguard the dominance at home of the ruling class.



These are industrial reconstruction to regain and extend our foreign markets; and an advanced programme of social reforms to increase the efficiency and stifle the discontent of the workers.

But the Conservative *Observer* was strongly against the levy on account of the undoubted disturbance it would cause (serious even if only temporary) in the British financial world.

We are perhaps nearer to them on international questions than to the older parties. If Labour had confined itself to a drastic programme of practical reconstruction—for electric power, transport, and the general development of the resources of the country—we would have been disposed to lend it a hand. (*Observer*, 25th November, 1923.)

The leaders of the Labour Party were, of course, not blind to the political situation, but, unfortunately for them, it was too near the date of the election (December 6th) to do anything very effective. Mr. Snowden had only a week or so earlier tried to find a way out by proclaiming that while the levy was good, the time was not quite so opportune, and that the proper moment was just after the war. And then, on Saturday, November 24th, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald went considerably further, and in fact admitted explicitly what we have always said: that the levy was a device to stabilise the capitalist system. He was making a last-hour endeavour to overcome the hostility of the industrial capitalists who could see in the levy only the certain danger that they would be put still more at the mercy of the banks. These are MacDonald's words in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester:—

Referring to the Capital Levy, Mr. MacDonald said he found it a most popular topic. It was not a special Labour proposal. Some people imagined they wanted to use it as a malign or magical leverage for the complete change of society. If he were a Capitalist and opposed to Socialism, he would support the capital levy. . . . He supported the capital levy, not as a Labour man but as a Scotsman. (*Observer*, 25th November, 1923.)

Those who have followed MacDonald's career will be impressed by the frequency with which his Scotch nationality has overwhelmed his socialist principles.

During the same week he spoke at Northampton and at Bristol, and showed again how little the levy had to do with the workers.

The Capital Levy proposal did not come from

the Labour Party in the first instance. It came from business men, economists, university professors, and others, and the Labour Party had not taken it up until they had enquired into it.

When the Labour Party had educated the people, it (the Capital Levy) would become popular and would be applied by other parties. (*New Age*, 29th November.)

It is, I think, quite plain that if the levy did mean helping the workers at the expense of those who exploit them it would not have come "from business men, university professors and others," nor would it ever become popular with the "other parties."

But the Labour Party's chances of getting the Astor millions behind it in the election were doomed to disappointment for the reasons I have mentioned above. The *Observer* had already decided upon its attitude. There was, however, an amusing sequel. While it was all very well for MacDonald to make such a speech disclosing the levy's real object, it would have been decidedly unwise to print it in the *Daily Herald*, where it would be read by the militant trade unionists who only fight for the Labour Party because they believe that it means to take really drastic action against the employing class.

Accordingly, we find that although the speech is reported in the *Daily Herald* of November 27th, and the same amount of space is given to it as in the previous day's *Observer*, the remarks about the levy are left out.

By a curious coincidence the same issue of the *Herald* contains an indignant letter from a worshipper of MacDonald, complaining that the British Broadcasting Company does not broadcast his speeches!

The Editor of the *Herald* was no doubt privately thanking God that the B.B.C. doesn't; and hoping that they never will.

H.

#### ON READING.

"We read to weigh and to discover. To do this properly there are rules to be followed. . . . The good reader marks his books, writes in the margins, copies out passages that he wants to memorise, and if he is wise makes a precis, not only of the subject matter, but also of his own impressions while he was reading. This helps one to weigh and consider deliberately."

S. P. B. MAIS.

#### BY THE WAY.

Another of our wise rulers has been giving us the benefit of his profound intellect; speaking at Bradford, Sir Eric Geddes said (*Daily News*, 7/7/23):

"Trade cycles are very undesirable . . . they are probably due to the natural and to some extent commendable tendency of sales departments to overestimate future demand."

Which means of course, that trade cycles are due to—eh! trade cycles. No doubt Eric, they are undesirable, for they interrupt the smooth working of the profit producing process, and play havoc among the smaller capitalists, but they are not the only undesirable things in a world of trade and profit. War, poverty, prostitution, and disease, are also noxious conditions generated in that world. But what happens that demand should suddenly cease? Have the masses a plentitude of the things they require? Let us see if there is an explanation. Lancashire produces cotton goods, and at one time had practically the monopoly of the world trade; for years her products represented more than a quarter of the total British exports. But other countries, including France, China and Japan, entered into competition, becoming to us lost customers and new competitors. Furthermore, we now export up-to-date textile machinery to these very countries. In 1913 the total exports of this class of machinery were valued at a little over eight million pounds. In 1922 they had risen to £25,000,000 (quoted from *News of the World*, 23/9/23). What does this mean? It means relatively shrinking markets, with fiercer competition in those markets, not only for cotton goods, but for nearly every other industry, industries in which these countries now engage. An enormous quantity of products produced in an ever shortening period of time, which neither the unlimited luxury of our masters and their hangers-on can consume, nor the meagre wages of the workers buy; wages representing in value but a small part of the wealth they have produced—not for their use, but for sale or exchange to realise the capitalists' profit. Failure to effect this sale, which to-day comes between production and the use of wealth, brings about a stoppage in production, known as an industrial crisis, with its consequent anarchy and chaos. Only then, when they cannot sell their

goods, and the crisis is upon them, do the manufacturers become aware of their over-estimated demand. Under Socialism, with production for use, sale would be abolished, thus allowing the uninterrupted and full satisfaction of social needs through co-operative organisation, instead of our present chaotic scramble. It is a striking confirmation of the Socialist exposition of trade cycles, that the gradually increasing competition for markets, dating from the first crisis of 1825, has been accompanied by shortening periods of years between the recurring crises, until to-day, international competition, accompanied by monopoly and deliberately restricted output, has resulted in one prolonged depression, that after three years shows no signs of abatement. The fiercer the competition grows, the greater the need for sections of the capitalists to secure and retain markets. Hence the cause of modern war.

The *Daily News*, commenting upon Sir Eric's observations, despairingly wails:—

"There is surely a middle course between sanctioning monopoly and tolerating anarchy."

Alas! a barren hope, for there is but one course, and it is for the workers to take it. It is to end capitalism, with its absurd contradiction, super abundance, and want, co-existent, and to establish a community of interests—Socialism.

MAC.

#### NEW YORK.

Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD interested in Socialist Educational Work may communicate with

Socialist Educational Society  
of New York,  
127, University Place New York City.

#### PORTSMOUTH.

Persons interested in the formation of a Branch of the Party in the above neighbourhood should communicate with—

H. JOHNSON,  
61, Riga Terrace,  
Landport,  
Portsmouth.



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Matthew-st., Latchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DEPTFORD.**—Sec., J. Veasey, 24, Marlton-st., E. Greenwich, S.E. 10. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month, at 8 o'clock, at 435, New Cross-rd., S.E. Discussion after Branch business. Public invited.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at The Arcadians, 42, Amhurst-rd., Hackney Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., T. Travis, 27, Arthur Street, Cobridge, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Sec., 3, Lyveden-rd., Tooting, S.W.17. Branch meets Fridays, at Parochial Hall, Church-lane, Tooting, at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 12, High Cross road, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to A. J. Godfrey, 30, Waverley road, Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.** Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Alexandra School, N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.****Sundays:**

Finbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Leytonstone, The Green Man, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:**

Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:**

Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Friday:**

Stratford, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Baths), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:**

Edmonton, The Green, 8 p.m.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## PHRASE WORSHIP.

There are few things more dangerous to the student—whether of politics or of any other subject—than the habit of mind which mistakes an eloquent phrase for a powerful argument, and accepts a striking illustration as proof of the principle it is intended merely to illustrate. Persuasive eloquence may be a gift, or it may be won by arduous toil, but there is at least no reason to believe that it serves only under the banner of Truth. There would be lean times for lawyers if this were so.

As for the seductiveness of the carefully chosen example, there never was an unsound theory which could not be supported by battalions of plausible instances; and there is no notion so transparently false that it will not serve to explain certain experiences to some person or other.

How else could fallacies win adherents or be conceived at all?

Everyone knows how the skilful orator can persuade people by his eloquence to accept an argument which would fail to convince them if they examined it coldly and critically. And even if the argument be sound, it is probable that most of those who hear it and are so readily persuaded that it is true have in fact not understood it at all. It is not possible to grasp in a moment the whole of the strong and weak points of a new principle; but it is fatally easy to grasp its application to a special instance, while overlooking the probability that the instance has been chosen because it is appropriate, and not because it is typical. The general principle, to be true, must apply without exception to all the events coming within its scope.

Protectionists urged at the recent election that unemployment cannot exist where there is protection of home industries, and for evidence they said: "Look at America." It gained many votes, but it will be remembered that there was usually no attempt made to *prove* the assertion. Those who made it relied solely on the force of the illustration, which was of course selected because, to the unreflecting, it seemed to be conclusive. No account was taken of the many countries where unemployment and protection are existing side by side at the present time, nor of the many occasions when they have coincided in the U.S.A. This illustration is of so little value really, that it could be used to support any number of other fallacious explanations of unemployment. For example: "Those countries are free from unemployment whose national pastime is gum-chewing. Look at America!"

In order that such a statement could be regarded as proved it would be necessary to list all the main possible consequences of protection in a particular country, and show how they would be likely to affect the amount of unemployment. The existence of both unemployment and protection in any other country would be fatal unless it could be accounted for by some special counter-acting circumstances, for there can be no exceptions to a valid principle.

The saying, "The exception proves the rule," is, as usually understood, just nonsense. What is really meant is that the *apparent* exception *tests* the rule. We, for instance, assert that unemployment is a necessary feature of the capitalist mode of



production. If that is true, then every capitalist country should be subject to periodic trade stagnation and unemployment. France at once presents itself as an exception, until we remember that France has a large standing army composed of men who would otherwise be unable to find civil employment. The rule is thus tested by the apparent exception, and found not to have been shown incorrect as far as France is concerned.

There are many people who have phrases like the one given in the last paragraph, which they use on all occasions to explain any controversial question. Unfortunately, they do not realise that they are erecting a barrier between themselves and the truth they wish to comprehend, and that through making no real effort, but simply satisfying themselves with a surface explanation, they are retarding their mental development. They also lay themselves open to deception by interested persons who know the powerful effect on the mind of these deadly drugs.

How often do we meet opponents who think they have answered our arguments by repeating the proverb, "Half a loaf is better than no bread." By this they mean that Socialism is not immediately obtainable, therefore, it is advisable to make the best of a bad business and try to reform capitalism.

They have some near relations—described satirically as the "step-at-a-time-and-the-smaller-the-better" school—who reach the same conclusion by way of the saying, "You must walk before you can run."

Now let us examine these two wise remarks, beginning with the first. As a simple statement of fact, meaning that the persons who want bread to eat had better take half a loaf than no bread at all, its truth needs no demonstration; but when used as an argument it is intended to mean much more than that. We can safely go further and agree that it can be applied correctly to all things of the same kind in similar relationships.

But it is just here that the danger arises. Examination ought to be, but generally is not, made before we can be satisfied that there is any analogy. For this reason we might usually just as well try to get our independent proof by treating each new problem on its merits. The trouble is that

the phrase is used without discrimination, as if it were a general proof, valid in all kinds of circumstances; which it certainly is not.

If someone were searching for things to throw at your head you would hardly consider that "half a loaf is better than no bread at all." Again the force of the proverb depends on the nature of loaves. Solomon had no hesitation in deciding that half a baby is not better than no baby at all, and the baby's mother agreed with the verdict. And the Prince in "Hassan" quite rightly foresaw that his chief of police and his military commandant, who were rival claimants for the credit of capturing an important prisoner, would not feel honoured by being compelled to split a gorgeous robe between them.

Before this proverb can properly be used as an argument in favour of reforms as against concentrating on the demand for Socialism, it is necessary to show that Socialism is divisible like bread, i.e., that it is merely the result of adding reforms to reforms. Examination however shows that it is not. Socialism is a system of society based upon the common ownership of the means of wealth production. Reforms are reforms of capitalism, which is a system of society based on private ownership. It is therefore untrue that "reforms of capitalism" and "Socialism" stand to each other in the same relation as "half a loaf" to a "whole loaf." There is no analogy, and thus the proverb has no bearing whatever on the problem under consideration.

It is, of course, open to those who hold this view to argue on other grounds that agitation for reforms is justifiable. They might try to prove that such agitation yields, or could yield, material benefit to the workers; but they would need to bear in mind that if they could give satisfactory proof, they would then be in danger of proving at the same time that Socialism is unnecessary. Our contention against the reform programme is that it usually fails, that the efforts are out of all proportion to the gains, and that it obscures the main issue, and thus hinders progress towards Socialism.

It is not my purpose here to substantiate my assertion: that has often been done in these pages. My present purpose is merely to show that our case is not so much as touched by the story of the loaf.

Treating in the same way the proverb, "You must walk before you can run," notice how this too depends on the special nature of the activities referred to, while like the other, claiming universal application. Is it necessary to walk on one leg before you can walk on two? Do tadpoles have to learn to walk before they can learn to swim? And has it any real bearing on the kind of activities required in replacing one economic system by another? Is it not merely a piece of laziness to avoid the necessity of dealing with the facts of the situation?

Some of the things requiring proof are these: (1) That modification of capitalism, such as nationalisation or State capitalism, are steps towards Socialism, and not away from it; (2) That they are in themselves beneficial to the workers; and (3) That they are necessary. The facts are: (1) That they are only additional obstacles; (2) That they are intrinsically bad for the workers; and (3) that they are quite unnecessary.

Having said that, the onus is on us to prove it, and on our opponents to disprove it. If I were to point out that a doctor tending a smallpox patient does not waste his time treating each spot separately, but goes straight to the root of the trouble; and if all the members of the Labour Party were to reply in chorus: "You must walk before you can run," no advance would have been made towards the settlement of the disputed question. But both statements are unquestionably true, and each is legitimately applicable to certain phenomena.

I would like to add that it is now about 120 years since capitalism began its "great" code of social reform. During those years the system has been constantly changing, but it is still the same capitalist system. The workers have had inflicted upon them innumerable reforms of different kinds, yet they are now, relatively to their powers of production, worse off than ever before. And the reason is simplicity itself. Reforms are but attempts to remedy the ever-increasing evils wrought by capitalism, but even if successful, the system still goes on producing new evils or aggravating old ones, and it does so much faster than the reformers can hope to arouse a sufficient demand for the passing of reform acts to meet them.

It has yet to be proved that further experience of "walking" under capitalism will teach the workers how to "run" under

Socialism. It appears to me that the State-regulated "Labour" administered capitalism of to-day or to-morrow has no useful lesson to teach the worker with eyes to see, which was not plainly visible in the competitive anarchy of fifty years ago, and there are many activities, modes of thought and ethical notions that must be *unlearned* before Socialism is going to be a reality.

Running may be regarded approximately as "quickened walking," but Socialism is not by any means capitalism polished and tinkered up; it is something different, because its foundation is different.

I suggest that the workers have been passive under capitalism because they have not yet learned to see that it is obsolete and therefore a social nuisance. If the inevitable worsening of conditions under capitalism breeds discontent in place of passivity it is a criminal act to turn that discontent towards reforms of capitalism, when without much more trouble it might be turned towards Socialism.

That passage like the one I wrote before contains assumptions to be justified and conclusions to be proved, but again I am not going to try to prove them here. All I wish to do is to repeat with emphasis that they are not to be proved nor disproved by references to quite other forces operating on objects of a different kind.

It is not possible to compile a complete, twentieth century "Guide to Emancipation" out of ancient proverbs, old wives' tales, nursery rhymes and other interesting odds and ends of learning and wisdom, gathered from the mind of the race in its infancy, or coined in rough and ready fashion in the turmoil of every-day life.

H.

## MANCHESTER.

The Manchester Branch has now been reconstituted. Enquirers wishing further information can apply to:—

**A. L. MYERSON, Secretary,**  
28, Brunswick Street, Hightown,  
MANCHESTER.

The Branch meets at 83, Ducie Street, every Thursday at 8.30 p.m. Discussion Class every Tuesday at 8.30 p.m. Public invited to all meetings.



**THE BACILLUS MUSSOLINI.**

The *Daily Telegraph* of October 25th seized the opportunity of Fascism's anniversary of accession to power in Italy to review its history. The review is the more valuable in that the writer makes little effort to conceal the direction in which his sympathies lie. No time is wasted on detailing how the poor peasant boy of Romagna, the bricklayer of Lausanne, the "Socialist" agitator and journalist, fought his way to the highest position of a Capitalist State. At the commencement of the article we find him there. No mention of his horde of Dirty Shirts, with their bludgeons, stilettos and castor oil. He is there! This is a free condensation of the article (italics mine): His first sweeping reform was to throw out of office the great army of lazy "grafters," political protégés, etc., created by a generation of government by unscrupulous and self-seeking politicians. The higher the official, the smaller his chance of being spared. The next step was to hit out against the petty political groups. One after another the old political groupings were smashed up and obliged to pronounce themselves for or against, but mostly for, the great Conservative reaction. The Liberals, the Populists, the Socialists have all been attacked on questions of principle; their ranks have been broken and scattered. In electoral reform he preserves proportional representation, but gives to the winning party two-thirds of the seats in Parliament. As the *Telegraph* man naively says: "This is in order to ensure for the governing party of the day the possibility of carrying out the reforms promised in its electoral programme. The world will follow with interest the working of this experiment in practical politics." We shall. "Mussolini has been eminently successful in bringing about social peace and the cessation of class warfare. In the beginning the means employed were physical pressure by the Fascist militia, which had recourse to very drastic means." (Pause for fiendish laughter.) "But very soon the tendency became manifest to apply more peaceful methods. The results are excellent, and during the last twelve months there has not been a single strike in the whole of Italy. This is a fact from which even Mussolini's detractors cannot get away."

The gloating contributor makes a bad slip just here. They can get away, for

lower down he tells us quite refreshingly, "in the long run Mussolini's foreign policy is entirely governed by the necessity of finding satisfactory outlets for Italian emigration. The country is a great reservoir of man-power which must be exported, and Mussolini is casting about for outlets."

What a country! What a Paradise! What a prospect! Having bludgeoned, hacked and castor-oiled his way to political power, he discovers he is lord of a huge reservoir of excellent, exploitable material for foreign capitalists. His message to the Italians is, "Italy is no place for you." There is one reservation. "A new departure is the decree forbidding the emigration of doubtful characters, so as to raise the reputation of Italy abroad." Mussolini has judged his world well. As the reservoir is emptied of all save the "doubtful characters" (doubtless fitted up with black shirts and oil equipment), the surrounding capitalist states will warm up wonderfully. A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind. It is good to learn that in this holy business he has the blessing of the Church. To again quote in full:—

"The ex-Socialist Prime Minister has frankly recognised and accepted the preponderating part played in Italian life by the Church. He has established a firm friendship with the Vatican, which in its turn supports him. The alliance with the Vatican gives to Mussolini, not only the active support of the powerful clerical elements in the country, but also assists him to a great extent in the development of his foreign policy."

Now read the bit about his foreign policy again. And then you will, or will not, be pleased to learn that 50,000 railwaymen have been ruthlessly sacked, in the name of economy. Presumably they are now at the gates of the reservoir. They may even be numbered with his detractors. Happy, happy country! Surely someone will inform the wretched denizens of Old Compton Street, Greek Street and Little Italy, of what they are missing. Perhaps they are wise after all. Why go to the expense and inconvenience of a voyage, when all these inestimable benefits will soon be brought to our doors. One reads with delight that Britain possesses at least two Fascist organisations, mainly engaged at the moment in squabbling over which one is the real, genuine, dyed-in-the-wool article. This question settled, and an agreement reached as to who is to sign the cheques, one can already discern the rosy flush of a new

dawn. Italy, hitherto associated in our minds, with ice-cream men, opera-singers and organ-grinders, is to fill our cup of indebtedness to the brim by presenting us with the New Liberty. Our cup runneth over. Already its prophets are afoot. You will remember Earl Grey at Newcastle on February 3rd last:—

"It is possible, under the chaos and confusion in Europe, that democratic representative government may go down for a time in favour of some other system."

Italy, we presume, shows us an example of the "other system." We hope you like it.

W. T. H.

Since writing the above, we read in the "Westminster Gazette" of October 26th:

"Italy at present offers a remarkable spectacle. The country is absolutely quiescent, the people intent only on their calling, and abiding by the laws. But the Fascist leaders and rank and file alike are quarrelling among themselves, unable to resist the temptation to usurp functions and prerogatives pertaining to the Government, unable either to rid themselves of the primitive, expeditious habit and the craving to take the law ruthlessly into their own hands."

Readers can supply their own comment. It may be useful to mention that Mussolini is referred to as the Duce. The deuce he is.

W. T. H.

**QUEENSLAND'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT.**

In the December issue an attempt was made to disprove some of the many untrue assertions about Labour rule in Queensland which have appeared in *Forward* and the *Daily Herald*. Tom Johnson has not replied to the charge of deliberate misrepresentation, and to support the charge against him further evidence is now to hand.

Among other things, I stated that the exploitation of the workers is keener and the rate of profit greater in Queensland than elsewhere in Australia. If anyone wants to see the full substantiation of this, it is contained in the reports of the debates in the Queensland Legislative Assembly (Parliamentary Debates, No. 25, Legislative Assembly, Oct. 4 and 5, 1923, page 1481 and following pages). The reason for the

publication of the statements, some of which I am going to quote, is that the Queensland Government is faced with the problem of raising new loans to meet repayments of old loans falling due now. Twenty-four million pounds is required at once, and Premier Theodore is in London to negotiate these loans as cheaply as possible. Failing London, he will be forced to go to New York, but in either financial centre it will be necessary to prove to the investors that Queensland is really a safe and profitable field for investment. Thus we have Mr. Fihelly, Agent-General in London, writing to *The Times* (Aug. 29, 1923) as follows:—

"I would again ask critics of Queensland to await the Premier's arrival, and in the meantime I can assure readers that no sensible investor seriously regards Queensland securities otherwise than of the soundest description."

It must be comforting to the workers in Queensland to know that the absentee investors who exact tribute from their labour can rest secure that those securities are of the soundest description. The additional material provided in the Legislative Assembly must be still more comforting.

A Mr. Weir, Labour Member for Maryborough, answers home critics at length, and so ably does he do so that it is a matter for regret that the whole speech cannot be reproduced here owing to its length:—

"The production of the workman in this State is head and shoulders above that of any other State. . . . This year I have again gone to some considerable trouble to frame a set of figures which will prove that this State, far from being ruined by the workers, owes more to the workers for its prosperity than to anyone else, and that this State is taking more out of the workers in the matter of industry than any other State. I have graded these figures and have segregated the items, to make my case clear, into raw materials, fuel and light, wages, and then surplus. The surplus is what I shall call 'swag.' . . . Some belongs to us, the workers, and some to them, but they take too much."

Mr. Weir then gives figures of wealth production per head of workers engaged, one set taken from the Official Commonwealth Year Book for 1922 (p. 403), and the second set taken from Government publications for the current year (1923). In the first set Queensland, with £921 per head, comes third, after Victoria (£953) and New South Wales (£951). By 1923 Queensland, then the only Labour State, had come top with £954, leaving New South Wales a bad second with only £892. Deducting the value of raw material and



fuel and light, Mr. Weir then gives the percentages going as wages and as profits:—

"In the case of the 'swag' we find that of the total output the captains of industry take for their share:—

	Wages. "Swag."	per cent.	per cent.
Queensland	16.89	20.67	
Tasmania	...	17.93	
Victoria	20.17	16.08	
West Australia	25.09	14.17	
New South Wales	18.59	12.70	
South Australia	...	10.79.	

He does not give the percentages of wages in Tasmania or South Australia, but states that both are higher than Queensland's. He protests on behalf of the Queensland workers against this difference. "We claim that they are entitled at least to the same percentage of wages based on the total output as is received in the other States."

He then gives statistics of actual average wages. "In a table on page 397 of the Official Year Book the Commonwealth average for wages is £169 per head. The amounts paid in the various States are:—

New South Wales	£182
West Australia	173
South Australia	167
Queensland	161
Victoria	159
Tasmania	151."

Mr. Weir then gives later information from "Bulletin No. 92:—

New South Wales	186
West Australia	192
South Australia	178
Queensland	177
Victoria	173
Tasmania	157."

It will thus be seen that in the first year Queensland's average wage was £8 below the average for Australia as a whole, and £21 below the highest. In the second year it is still £15 below the highest.

Mr. Weir also deals with one or two industries to give further illustration.

In the sawmills of Queensland the total output is £2,971,079, while wages amount to approximately £750,000. Raw materials, fuel, light, etc., account for £1,636,221, leaving a balance of "swag" of £584,858. Mr. Weir, after allowing apparently for depreciation, puts profit at £500,000 and wages at £750,000. In other words, out of the total wealth produced by the labour of the sawmill workers no less than 40 per cent., or two-fifths, is appropriated by non-producers at home or abroad.

While for Queensland as a whole, out of every 36s. worth of wealth produced by the workers about £1 goes as profits to members of the property-owning class.

"On the total cost of production, the men doing the hard work in this State get the least in the Commonwealth."

In effect we have these Labour "care-takers" of capitalism in Queensland inviting the investment of foreign capital with the plea "that our slaves are the most profitable, the most heavily exploited, and the most docile in Australia." Well may the *Workers' Weekly* of Sydney complain that "the Queensland workers are being sold on the auction block" (Nov. 16, 1923), and well may the workers demand an explanation from their "revolutionary" leaders who ask them to continue returning to power Theodore and his gang who are responsible for this flagrant betrayal of the working-class interests.

Let me repeat that there is no hope for the workers save in Socialism.

H.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

Manchester.

November 14th, 1923.

Dear Comrade,

I would be greatly obliged if you could please explain to me the following point in the next issue of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*.

I remain,

Yours fraternally,

S. MILLION.

In "Capital," Chapter 7, Section 1 (The Labour-process or the Production of Use-values), Marx says:—

"Suppose that a capitalist pays for a day's labour-power at its value; then the right to use that power for a day belongs to him, just as much as the right to use any other commodity, such as a horse that he has hired for the day. To the purchaser of a commodity belongs its use, and the seller of labour-power, by giving his labour, does no more, in reality, than part with the use-value he has sold. From the instant he steps into the workshop, the use-value of his labour-power, and therefore also its use, belongs to the capitalist."

Marx thus shows that it is his labour-power, and not his labour, which the labourer sells to the capitalist.

In Chapter 7, Section 2 (The Production of Surplus-value), Marx says:—

"The circumstance, that on the one hand the daily sustenance of labour-power costs only half-

a-day's labour, while on the other hand the very same labour-power can work during a whole day, that consequently the value which its use during one day creates is double what he pays for that use, this circumstance is, without doubt, a piece of good luck for the buyer, but by no means an injury to the seller. . . . Every condition of the problem is satisfied, while the laws that regulate the exchange of commodities have been in no way violated. Equivalent has been exchanged for equivalent. For the capitalist as buyer paid for each commodity, for the cotton, the spindle, and the labour-power, its full value."

Since Marx admits that the capitalist pays for the commodity, labour-power, at its full value (i.e., a sum of money necessary for the means of sustenance and reproduction of labour-power), and since the circumstance that the labourer can in a day create double the value to that he consumes, "is by no means an injury to the seller," by what economic law does Marx prove the exploitation, or the robbery, of the working classes?

## ANSWER TO S. MILLION.

If the questioner will read more carefully Sec. 2 of Chapter 7 (from which he takes his second quotation), he will see that Marx is speaking from the point of view of the market, and is dealing with *appearances* only, accompanying his statement with ironical remarks. Equivalent is exchanged for equivalent, therefore how can there be any robbery, is the view of the capitalist as set out by Marx. Subsequent chapters investigate the problem in greater detail and go behind the appearance to see what gives rise to it.

The buying and selling of labour-power presupposes the labour market, which in its turn presupposes a propertyless class that must find buyers for its labour-power or perish. The labour-power sold on the market is consumed outside the market in the sphere of production, and it is here that the worker is robbed. In using up his labour-power the worker not only produces surplus value for the capitalist, but at the same time he produces his own means of subsistence; the worker is paid with a portion of his own product. This position arises from the fact that the worker does not own his product.

Owing to a process of robbery that has gone on for ages, the means of wealth production have eventually come into the hands of their present owners—the capitalists.

The bulk of society—the workers—are thus left with only one method of obtaining a legitimate living—selling their labour-power to the capitalist. In doing this they do something more in reality: they hand over to the capitalist a portion of their product without any equivalent. This latter fact is concealed from the worker by the money—or wage—relation. Just as the serf gives over to the feudal lord a portion of his product for nothing, so does the wage-labourer.

Marx sums the matter up in Chapter 24 as follows:—

"The exchange of equivalents, the original operation with which we started, has now become turned round in such a way that there is only an apparent exchange. This is owing to the fact, first, that the capital which is exchanged for labour-power is itself but a portion of the product of others' labour appropriated without an equivalent; and, secondly, that this capital must not only be replaced by its producer, but replaced together with an added surplus. The relation of exchange subsisting between capitalist and labourer becomes a mere semblance appertaining to the process of circulation, a mere form, foreign to the real nature of the transaction, and only mystifying it. The ever-repeated purchase and sale of labour-power is now the mere form; what really takes place is this—the capitalist again and again appropriates, without equivalent, a portion of the previously materialised labour of others, and exchanges it for a greater quantity of living labour. At first the rights of property seemed to us to be based on a man's own labour. At least, some such assumption was necessary, since only commodity owners with equal rights confronted each other, and the sole means by which a man could become possessed of the commodities of others was by alienating his own commodities; and these could be replaced by labour alone. Now, however, property turns out to be the right on the part of the capitalist to appropriate the unpaid labour of others or its product, and to be the impossibility, on the part of the labourer, of appropriating his own product. The separation of property from labour has become the necessary consequence of a law that apparently originated in their identity" (pp. 597/598).

GILMAC.

## LEEDS AND DISTRICT.

Will those interested in the formation of a Branch in the above area communicate with

E. Boden,

1, Colenso Road,

Holbeck,

Leeds.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

FEBRUARY



1924

**A "SOCIALIST" GOVERNMENT.**

We are on the eve of great events—at least, Mr. Garvin, of the *Observer*, says we are!

"The reason is that to-morrow in this country will see the end of the last purely Conservative Government—none of the same name is ever likely to exist again—and will instal the first Socialist Government in its place."

We really must take exception to this constant tying of the labels "Socialist" and "Marxian" to the Labour Party. It is not fair. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has frequently pointed out that the Labour members are thorough gentlemen, that they do not propose to disturb seriously existing relations, and that "moral flourishes" will be one of the principal weapons. And is not Dr. Addison one of their pillars?

Anyone in doubt about the policy to be pursued by the Labour Government can obtain fruitful information from the columns of the *New Leader*. In the issue of January 4th they make the following remarks, under the heading, "Labour's Agenda: Suggestions Invited":—

"All of us are discussing the items which may find a place in Labour's programme, when it takes office, as it almost certainly will, before the end of this month. Everyone understands that many of the bigger changes to which we are committed are excluded by the composition of this House or by the conditions of national finance. As to the main lines of our policy, there is no doubt or

division of opinion. We must (1) substitute work for doles, which involves a Housing scheme; (2) recognise Russia and bring to suffering Germany the promptest rescue we can devise; (3) clear up the dangerous tangle over oil, stop the Singapore dock, and drop the territorial claim to Mosul; (4) apply our Labour policy to the urgent case of agriculture as fully as the House will allow."

Can anyone, with even the most powerful microscope, find anything Socialist in these "main lines"? Capitalism, the present social system, involves the private ownership by the capitalists of the means of wealth production and signifies the enslavement of the propertyless workers, the mass of the population. Socialism involves the common ownership, by the whole of the population, of the means of production, and signifies the end of slavery. The change from Capitalism to Socialism is a revolutionary one and admits of no piecemeal policy. The "main lines" of Socialist action, therefore, are revolutionary ones, definitely laid out to uproot the capitalistic foundations of the existing social system.

The attempt by Garvin and others to identify the ideas of Socialism with the Labour Party's policy is a convenient method of curbing the workers' desire for freedom and increasing the confusion already existing. The tendency of the workers to see in capitalism the real source of their miseries is dangerous from the point of view of the upholders of the present system. Garvin and his kind are astute, so they endeavour to fix the workers' attention upon the Labour Party as the representatives of the new social idea. In due course the Labour Party will fail at the same obstacles—unemployment, and so forth—as the older parties. The Garvin group will then point triumphantly to this failure as an illustration of the incapacity of Socialism to solve economic problems. They bank on the idea that disappointment will breed apathy. This is one reason why we are so anxious to dispel any illusions the workers may have about the advantages to be expected from a Labour Government.

The Labour Party is not a Socialist body, and it repudiates the views of Marx. It is a snare set for dissatisfied but unwary workers.

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**THE MANORIAL SYSTEM.**

How often do we hear discussion stifled by that familiar remark from the lips of some defender of things as they are, that "Capitalism has always been and must therefore always be." Even if the first part of the statement were true, the second part, the conclusion, would still need proving. Because cows through all the ages since they were first domesticated had been milked by hand, that did not prevent inventors from trying (finally with success) to make a machine to do the same work. But it is not true that capitalism has always been, and if only the workers were even slightly familiar with the way in which capitalism has grown up, and with the forms of organisation which preceded it, how much easier our task would be.

You will all of you have heard of the "Lord of the Manor"; nowadays, a country gentleman who sits on the Bench of Magistrates, draws rent from his landed estates, and is generally an ornament of county society, even if not a very useful person. There was, however, a time when the Manor was a vital part of the life of the country, and I will try to give a brief outline of the system that then existed, in the hope that it may make some readers interested in the history of their own class and its predecessors.

The Manorial system is the name given to the agricultural organisation of society which was general in Western Europe in the Middle Ages; that is, between the break-up of the Roman Empire and, say, the fifteenth century. Whether it arose in England as a direct result of Roman rule over the original inhabitants, and was continued through the replacement of the Romans by the Anglo-Saxon invaders, or whether it developed out of the free villages which the latter introduced from the Continent, it is difficult to decide. It can be said, anyway, that its hold over Western Europe was evidence that it was admirably suited to the needs and conditions of the age, and it was certainly far advanced in this country at the time of the Norman invasion in the year 1066.

To outline the system one may conveniently consider the Manor, which was its unit, but it must be remembered that not only did manorial customs vary greatly with the locality, but also the continual process of change was by no means uniform. Some

parts of Europe, and even of this country, developed much faster than others.

The basis of the system was the tenure of land. In the eleventh century there were about 1,400 direct tenants of the king, who as Manorial Lords had to give him military and other services. Then these chief tenants had 8,000 sub-tenants, who had to give similar service and allegiance to them. Each of these sub-tenants might hold one or two manors, while the chief tenants would have a large number. Within each manor were various groups of inferior tenants who received military and judicial protection, and gave their lord in return some payments in kind—that is, goods—and also gave him some of their labour free of payment.

A typical manor would consist of perhaps 20 or 30 small dwellings grouped together, and standing somewhat apart the much bigger house occupied by the Lord of the Manor. There would also be a church, and if there was a stream, a mill standing over it. Round this village would be several hundred acres of ploughland in two, three, or four large fields—three being the usual number. Outside this would lie the pasture land, and beyond the pasture there would be a great stretch of waste and woodland.

This little centre of production would be almost self-supporting and independent of the outside world. In it could be produced all the food and clothing needed, except for one or two articles like salt for meat preserving, mill-stones, and a small quantity of iron for swords and ploughshares.

Under the lord were the following classes:—The "villeins," who were the most numerous, and had holdings of about 30 acres; the "cottars," somewhat less numerous, who had up to 5 acres; a small class of "freemen" or "socmen"; and a still smaller class of slaves. All of these, except sometimes the freemen, were tied to the manor where they were born, and were not permitted to leave it; at first, however, they did not want to do so, because there was nowhere for them to go. The land of these various classes was not in a compact holding, as it would be in our day, but was scattered all over the three big fields in acre or half-acre strips. No man would have two strips together, and they were re-distributed each year so that each man would have a chance of getting his fair share of good and bad land.



The Lord of the Manor protected his tenants or "serfs" against attacks from outside, and they gave him labour service, and the freemen, who gave him military service as well. The freemen used to do what was called "boonwork" for him; that is, work at special seasons like haytime and harvest. The villeins had to do boonwork, and would also have to work three or four days each week on the lord's land instead of on their own; and the cottars would give perhaps one day a week. The cottars, having little land of their own, would work for some kind of payment. All this work was done under the supervision of the bailiff, and the land of the Lord of the Manor—the "Demesne" land—would often, but not always, be scattered about in strips like the rest.

It used to be complained by the lord or his bailiff that although the serfs worked hard on their own land, when they were ploughing the demesne land they would stop at the end of each furrow to pray and sing hymns. You can imagine your employer having a fit if you did this in his workshop, or on his farm, but in those days people were much more pious than they are now.

The work on the arable land, both ploughing and reaping, was done by the villagers working in common; they would all help each other, instead of each doing his own little plots. In those days this was a very economical way of getting the work done, and it prevented any of the land from being cultivated less carefully than the rest. Of course, it also had the disadvantage that it prevented one man from introducing any new ideas, and later on, when men began to learn better ways of farming, this became a serious matter.

The villagers had the right to graze their oxen and swine on the waste and woodland, and after harvest on the stubble land as well. There are many places in this country, especially in the Southern Counties, where the villagers still have the right to graze cattle and cut bracken on the manorial lands; but most of these rights have long since been stolen.

The methods of cultivation were rigidly fixed by tradition, so that each year one field would contain wheat or rye for bread, one would contain barley, oats, beans, or peas, and the third would lie fallow, waiting for the soil to recover from the exhaustion of previous crops.

It will be noticed that no money passed between the lord and his serfs, and there was no buying and selling. Even the king's taxes and the Pope's tithes were paid in wool or other produce.

This organisation was at the height of its development during the thirteenth century, and signs of decay began to appear in the early years of the fourteenth century, just as capitalism has long shown signs of decay in our own day. The main forces which disintegrated the Manorial system were the appearance of money and its general use in place of the old labour services, and changes in agricultural methods which led eventually to the setting up of farms on which the farmer and his labourers do the work as he thinks fit, quite independently of the other villagers. Men began to work individually instead of working in common.

By the middle of the thirteenth century it was already customary for the bailiff to sell some of the produce outside the manor, and with the money so obtained to hire day labourers to work alongside the "villeins," who still gave their services according to the old arrangements. Gradually both lords and serfs became familiar with the use of money, and they got into the habit of reckoning the services as worth so much money even where no money was paid over. Neither of these changes I have mentioned could become important until there was a reliable coinage, and until there was someone who wanted agricultural produce and was able to pay for it.

The market was provided by the towns which had been growing up during the centuries. They were formed round monasteries and garrison towns, and at places where foreigners came to buy English wool and sell their fine cloths, and they were recruited by runaway serfs who found that there was a demand for blacksmiths, clothworkers, and other handicraftsmen. At first these towns were only like big villages, and grew their own food, but when they got too large they had to get what they wanted from further afield. As these towns became more important and their craftsmen and merchants more powerful, they required a stable coinage in order to carry on their business. The kings at that time were in need of money, too, so that they could carry on their foreign wars, and they eventually took steps to provide the necessary coinage.

The Lords of the Manors also wanted money to buy luxuries from abroad, and to equip themselves for the wars of the Crusades, and to get this they began the practice of accepting money from the serfs in place of labour service. To this the villeins readily agreed, because they had always resented being called away from their own work at the busy seasons of the year just when they could least afford to be away. The valuation of services in money had probably become fairly general in the first half of the thirteenth century, although it cannot be said that all the serfs had established any right to demand this.

It was a growing practice, too, for the lord to let the demesne land to his bailiff for a money rent, which was something quite unknown before, and he then might draw revenue, but be freed from all trouble and responsibility himself. And, owing to the more settled state of the country and the increasing power of the king, it was no longer necessary for the Lord of the Manor to provide military protection, and the Manorial courts were deprived of their old power.

The fact of having rent-paying tenants in charge of the demesne lands naturally led these men to try to improve their methods of cultivation and bring in big profits. Nothing like this could have been attempted under the old order of things.

These various changes were going on with increasing speed when an outstanding event occurred which drastically hastened them. This was the plague called the Black Death, which happened in the year 1348. Nearly half of the population was swept away, and this completely upset the existing relations between lords and serfs. The shortage of labour naturally made itself felt in an increase of money wages for those workers who had firmly established the custom of money payments, in spite of severe and repeated legislation to prevent them from getting any more than had been paid before 1348. Equally naturally, those who were still bound to give their services were much dissatisfied when they saw how much free men were able to demand. On the other hand, the lords were impoverished by the loss by death of so many of those on whose labour their wealth had depended, and at the same time they found that they had to pay more for their hired men. There had always, of course, been some dis-

content, but now it broke out in open insurrections. The greatest of these, the Peasant Revolt of 1381, was of importance, although it did not seem to have been fully successful at the time. The Manorial Lords looked in another direction to save themselves. They turned their lands into sheep farms, instead of ploughing them, as had been the rule.

The growth of the wool trade with Flanders cloth merchants helped them materially. First, it made sheep-farming very profitable; and as sheep require large areas and only a small amount of labour to tend them, the Lords used every conceivable means to rid the Manors of their small tenants, who had been serfs and had bought the right to work their holdings without giving labour service in return. They also found means to become possessed of the huge wastes and commons which, of course, did not really belong to them. Secondly, a class of wealthy merchants had sprung up who were willing to pay large rents for farm lands which they wanted to cultivate on a basis very much like that with which we are familiar to-day.

Thus many strips were amalgamated to make compact farms, and these again were grouped into still larger ones.

The result of all this was that by the reign of Queen Elizabeth about the middle of the fifteenth century there were no longer any serfs in England, although the rest of Europe was much more backward. In Russia serfdom was not abolished until 1861.

Instead of the Manors on the old basis, there were now a number of individually cultivated farms run for profit, and a large number of small farms owned or rented by the free descendants of the serfs, but still cultivated in the ancient manner by the whole of the villagers working together and dividing their holdings up into strips. It was, however, now the rule for money rent to be paid for all these farms, whether big or small, except where they had been bought outright as had often been done.

Those who had been turned off the land drifted amid intense suffering into the towns to take part in the industries which were everywhere growing up. They became in the main independent craftsmen, and it was not till long after that anything arose similar to our modern factory system, where one capitalist employs hundreds or even thousands of "hands."



In the same way there were not yet in the country a very large number of labourers without any land, compelled to work all the year round for someone else, and entirely dependent on their wages for their upkeep.

These further changes did not come till the eighteenth century, and must be described in another article. H.

### FINANCIAL FOG.

I have read this pamphlet with ordinary care, but I have not the least idea what Mr. Neft is driving at. The 48 pages would be heavy at 6d., even if they contained something of value, but they are in fact full of contradictions, unsupported assertions, pious hopes, and ill-chosen quotations.

The actual proposal before the workers is the Labour Party's scheme for halving the National Debt and reducing taxation. Mr. Neft's main argument is this. *High* taxation is good for the workers; therefore, vote for the Labour Party and *low* taxation!

He proves quite neatly on page 43 that all taxes are paid by the capitalist class. This is, however, only a tribute to his own powers of persuasion, for when he wrote page 20 he was of quite another mind. He there says that during the war capitalist governments borrowed money for war expenditure instead of raising it by taxation, because "Only the few can lend, but *ALL* can be taxed," and thus the Government "made the Many pay interest to the Few" (capitals by Mr. Neft).

He has made several startling discoveries. One is that the capitalist class live by owning *all* the means of wealth production, land, factories, railways, etc., and "In addition, they claim £7,000,000,000 from the rest of the community" (page 28).

He knows that there is a robber class and a robbed class, but he has found a third class, the "middle class." These unfortunate people, who it seems neither work nor live on the labour of others, must live on their own backs by robbing themselves.

I cannot tell whether Mr. Neft wants us to think that he is a socialist or whether he wants us to be most impressed by the prominently displayed support for the levy from W. L. Hitchens, chairman of Cammell, Laird & Co.

It is certainly interesting to learn that the levy is going to benefit everybody, and that

"As every penny taken from them as levy will be returned to them in payment of their war loans the rich will actually lose nothing" (page 21).

With this "nothing" taken from the rich, Mr. Neft is going to pay for "an increased and improved social service, and never mind the cost" (page 44).

He calls capitalism a "social disease," but wants the capitalists to be compensated. Still, I am not worrying, because the compensation is to come out of whatever balance is left after the "nothing" mentioned above has been used to pay for those increased social services.

It appears not to have occurred to Mr. Neft that if capitalism is a social disease it would be advisable to abolish it. He has a simple and original remedy. The capitalist class pay all the taxes; therefore, the workers should aim at becoming burdens on the taxes and thus win back some of the surplus value stolen from them in production. Mr. Neft omitted to draw specific attention to the permanent paupers who have won through to this desirable state of things. Everyone knows what a fine, prosperous, independent, intelligent and morally admirable crowd they are. A moment's thought will show that if the capitalists could get what Mr. Neft wants them to have, it would be the finest thing that ever happened—for them.

He tells us on page 40 that "The levy can reduce taxation. . . . It can, therefore, reduce the price of commodities. "That is evident," but that as wages will fall correspondingly, the workers will not gain anything.

Then on page 44 we learn that remission of taxes is useless, because "You can take a penny off the worker's beer, but as soon as the tea-thief smells that penny he puts the price of his commodity up and gets the penny that the beer-thief has relinquished."

Thus we have (1) the beer-thief voluntarily, and out of kindness of heart, reducing the price of beer by the amount of the remitted tax; (2) wages falling; (3) wages not falling; (4) the tea-thief being less kindly than the beer-thief, and putting up the price of tea; (5) the tea-thief robbing the worker of the surplus which has already been taken by the wage reduction which has both taken place and not taken place, etc.

There are two things Mr. Neft might have said but didn't. One is that as on his own showing the capitalist class will still own

the means of production after the levy, it does not matter a twopenny damn or a six-penny pamphlet whether the capitalists have a levy or not.

The second is that the capitalist system is the evil and should be abolished.

There is also a question he might have answered. During the war when the Labour leaders were trying to prevent the workers from taking advantage of the labour shortage to get wage increases it was an article of faith with them (although fallacious) that the capitalist could always pass such burdens on to the consumer. What is to prevent them from doing this with the capital levy? If they can do so and also get it back "in payment of their war loans" as Mr. Neft promises, it looks as if they will be "quids in." H.

### BY THE WAY.

Under the heading of "The Workers' Searchlight," a writer in *The People*, 7/9/23, Andrew Buchanan, J.P., appears rather anxious regarding what he terms, the various and contradictory conceptions of "Socialism" existing. Of the writings of Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Webb he states:—

"It would be of immense advantage if their next book would deal with the various conceptions of Socialism and 'Control of Industry,' held by the leading members of the Labour Party, S.D.F. and I.L.P."

With real sporting instinct we may gamble that there is one conception that they, like Mr. Buchanan, will leave severely alone, and that is the scientific conception of Marx and Engels, upon which the Socialist Party is founded. A conception that furthermore proves the above organisations to be useless to the workers. Only the Marxian conception, which renders clear an understanding of the class conflict existing under capitalist society, can explain the misconceptions of such parties as the I.L.P., S.D.F., and the Labour Party, whether such misconceptions arise from a conscious effort to confuse and sidetrack the workers, or from the sickly religious sentiment of a large proportion of their members. The manifesto of the S.P.G.B. is a small work that deals with the treachery and confusion of the various parties existing in this country, it is a challenge to all comers, our anti-socialist J.P. included.

\* \* \*

Another body of people with a burning desire to "do something" for the dear workers is the Brotherhood movement. One of their number outlining their so-called principles in *The People*, 7/9/23, and anticipating that some impudent interloper may ask, "Is it practical?" "Does it do anything?" gives the answer in the softest of Brotherhood tones:—

"In Britain at present we are trying to help the unemployed. During the week we held a series of meetings on the Tyneside. At these we were able to offer refreshment, some good music, and a bit of good cheer."

Beautiful! Almost gives the impression of sublime innocence, had not the dear brethren something more far-reaching to offer:—

"We propose an industrial truce for a period of at least five years. During that period there shall be no strikes or lock-outs, and no attempt to abuse the present situation. A genuine attempt shall be made to cope with foreign competition and restore prosperity."

As one of the methods used by the master class to cope with foreign competition, and compete in the world's markets is to intensify exploitation, and reduce wages as far as possible, we can imagine to what depths the Brotherhood bunkumites would reduce the workers by their nonsensical proposals. Contemplate the position: The masters using every means to wring the utmost ounce of useful energy from the toilers, gratifying their profit lust, whilst the said workers are to become such abjectly servile creatures as not even to raise a murmur in protest. What a paradise—for the masters. Truly the Brotherhood reveals its obsequious capitalist nature in every utterance.

"By means of warm-hearted fellowship it endeavours to free society from the murmur and the subtlety of suspicion with which we vex one another and to persuade the public mind with the finer essence of generosity forgiveness and forbearance."

What drivel! Warm-hearted fellowship under class robbery, through the vilest form of human slavery that ever existed, forgiveness for the wholesale murder of the workers in industry and war, forbearance amidst unemployment, wearying toil, and vile surroundings; and yet this sloppy crew would plead with you that "There shall be no attempt to abuse the present situation." Why? for their capitalist masters' sake they do not wish to see the workers restless and impatient, seeking the way out of their



misery, spurning the proffered assistance of the liars who pretend solicitude for the workers' welfare. They declare that

"In place of the present feud between Capital and Labour there ought to be understanding and help. Unless it is secured we shall plunge into bankruptcy."

We declare war, bitter, relentless war upon capitalism and its defenders until victory to the workers shall be secured by the coming of Socialism.

\* \* \*

"The time had come when someone should speak instead of waiting for Socialists to explain or exploit evils. People were asking for ideals, and it was the man with such who was after all the most practical and 'got there' every time" (*South London Press*, 2/11/23).

What a harvest awaits the advent of these practical people to-day. In Great Britain alone over 40,000 men, women and children succumb annually to that dread disease tuberculosis, a disease admitted by all authoritative opinion to be due to poor resistance to infection, through bad conditions, i.e., bad housing, insufficient food, etc.

"The sanatorium treatment has taught this lesson—that Tuberculosis is more a social and economic than a microbe problem, and could be more or less eradicated in a generation if the nation seriously attempted to improve the social conditions of the people. Better feeding and better housing are surer weapons against Tuberculosis than vaccines" (Dr. Muthu, 25 years Mendip Hills Sanatorium: *Daily News*, 23/8/23).

But these conditions are an inseparable part of capitalism; it breeds them and fosters them.

"When these are remedied this fell disease will as surely disappear in the same way as leprosy, typhus, smallpox, and typhoid fever" (*Daily Mail Year Book*, 1923, p. 4).

How does our idealist "get there"? He is so very practical, you know. By removing the cause? Oh dear no! A few months away from the original breeding ground, improved conditions—for a time, and then—the victim is returned to the same old source of infection to become acquainted with the same old conditions; such is the remedy of the people who are the "most practical." Disease is only one of the effects of the social conditions of to-day, and the only real service to suffering humanity is rendered by those who seek to establish a sane and healthy system in place of capitalism with its multitude of disorders.

\* \* \*

What superficial observers of the social conditions of to-day we Socialists appear to be, for here in our midst is a source of social corruption unestimated by us, and yet so great in magnitude that common or ordinary mortals cannot even imagine its devastating influences!

"I do not think it is possible for the ordinary reader to imagine the moral decline, the mischievous influence over all alike, which spring from this evil thing. The steady receipt of money for which no equivalent in work is rendered makes against everything that is good in the receiver's life. I do not hesitate to say that tens of thousands of people in these islands have learned, or are learning at this very time, to live without work" (General Booth: *Daily Mail*, 14/12/23).

Without work—how sad, and terrible, and all that was once noble and idyllic in their tranquil lives bartered for a paltry pittance—a dole: surely the end of everything. It is not poverty, nor prostitution, your filthy slums or your work-burdened lives that casts a gloom over your existence, but, according to the comic opera general, the return by your masters of a microscopic portion of the wealth stolen from you in order to effect them a cheap insurance against the more costly discontent that might arise from your desperate plight. Is work such an elevating and ennobling pastime that it should be the sole purpose of your existence? The capitalist idlers and their charity mongers would have you believe so, that they may continue in affluent security; when all partake in the needful work of an organised community insulting charity for you and senseless luxurious debauchery for your masters will be relegated to the many absurdities of a class society. Mac.

#### NAPOLEON ON RELIGION.

"What is it that makes the poor man think it quite natural that there are fires in my palace while he is dying of cold? That I have ten coats in my wardrobe while he goes naked? That at each of my meals enough is served to feed his family for a week? It is simply religion, which tells him that in another life I shall be only his equal, and that he actually has more chance of being happy there than I. Yes, we must see to it that the floors of the churches are open to all, and that it does not cost the poor man much to have prayers said on his tomb."—"The Life and Times of Count Molé." Quoted in the *Daily News*, December 31st, 1923.)

#### ROBERT BLATCHFORD.

Robert Blatchford recently resigned his post on the *Sunday Chronicle* and *Sunday Herald*. The reason he gave was that he was "tired of all this dirty business of lying about the Labour Party and similar tactics" (*Daily Herald*, January 7th, 1924). This sounds fine, and it drew from George Lansbury a column of extravagant appreciation, but when one remembers something of Blatchford's career it seems particularly out of place that he, of all men, should be praised for his independence and disinterested enthusiasm for Socialism. He had in his own words "been associated with these papers for seven years," and during those years had reached the point of repudiating most of the views of his youth, including all that he ever held of Socialism. He had shown himself one of the most violent of the stop-at-home fighters who gloried in the knowledge that the workers were butchering each other for the class Blatchford was serving. After selling his "great genius" to the capitalist Press for seven years, Blatchford decides to desert them; curiously, just at the moment when the Labour Party is about to take over the administration; and for this we are expected to honour him!

There are some who charitably ask that Blatchford be forgiven his treachery of the past seven years as a "mistake." Must we then also forgive his even more transparent treachery over the Boer War, when the open Imperialism of the British capitalists was opposed by Lloyd George?

As for his work for Socialism, it is as well to remember that it was the *Clarion* and its editor who reaped all the glory, not Socialism. The activities he organised were "Clarion" clubs and choirs and vans, and, as shown below, he appears to have reaped no small advantage from them. George Lansbury's opinion certainly does not seem to have been shared by one who knew Blatchford well—his brother Montague.

In a letter to David Lowe, reproduced by him in *Forward* (December 22nd, 1923) Keir Hardie wrote as follows:—

"House of Commons,  
"9th August, 1902.

"Dear Davie,

"I am sending you a *Manchester Guardian*. It is good. When at Halifax recently I spent an evening at a friend's house where Mont. Blatchford was present. The bottle

went round, and he came over to say that the C. (*Clarion*) was about to burst. That Nunquam and Dangle had not spoken, save to wrangle, for weeks. He afterwards saw me home in the wee sma' 'oors. The two able men have quarrelled about the division of the spoil. Each has an income, presumably, all told, of £600 a year. He, M.B., was happy on less than half, but the others had inflated notions of living; the more they got the more they wanted; they no longer wrote for the love of the Cause but purely for what it brought them; the Bounder, when alive, kept things straight with his fine scorn, but now there was no one to intervene, and the meetings of the Board were a series of wrangles over money affairs. All this and more, with much reiteration. He was sick of it, was going to clear out, and felt sure the whole thing was about to burst. . . ."

"Nunquam," of course, is Robert Blatchford, and "Dangle" is A. M. Thompson, another loyal servant of the employing class who may also be expected to develop a tender conscience now that his erstwhile comrades have become His Majesty's Government. H.

#### FREEDOM!

"But the man who is always hovering on the verge of want is in a state not far removed from that of slavery. He is in no sense his own master; but is in constant peril of falling under the bondage of others, and accepting the terms which they dictate to him. He cannot help being, in a measure, servile, for he dares not look the world boldly in the face; and in adverse times he must look either to alms or the poor rates. If work fails him altogether, he has not the means of moving to another field of employment; he is fixed to his parish like a limpet to its rock, and can neither migrate nor emigrate."

SAMUEL SMILES.

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That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE PASSING OF LENIN.

One of the significant facts brought into prominence by the great war was the intellectual bankruptcy of the ruling class of the Western World.

A gigantic field of operations and colossal wealth at their disposal, failed to bring out a single personality above the mediocre, from England and Germany down the list to America and Roumania.

The only character that stood, and stands, above the Capitalist mediocrities, was the man lately buried in Moscow—Nikolai Lenin.

The senseless shrieks of the Capitalist henchman against Lenin was itself evidence of their recognition of their own inferiority. All the wild and confused tales that were told by the agents of the master class (from Winston Churchill to Mrs. Snowden) to suggest that Lenin was "the greatest monster of iniquity the world has ever seen," largely defeated their object, to every person capable of thinking clearly, by their sheer stupidity and extravagance.

One result of this tornado of lies was to cause a corresponding reaction on the other side. The various groups of woolly headed Communists, inside and outside of Russia, began to hail Lenin a new "Messiah" who was going to show the working class a new quick road to salvation. Thus does senseless abuse beget equally senseless hero-worship.

From sheer exhaustion the two-fold campaign has died down in the last year or two, even the "stunt" press only giving small space to Lenin and Russia.

Lenin's sudden death, despite his long illness, has brought forward a flood of

articles and reviews entirely different in tone from those that greeted his rise to power.

The shining light of modern Conservatism—Mr. J. L. Garvin—does not know whether Lenin was famous or infamous, whether he was a great man or a great scoundrel, so, wisely, leaves the verdict to posterity to settle.

A Fabian pet, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, in the *New Statesman*, for the 2nd February, makes the claim that Lenin's great work was the "invention of the Soviet"! It is difficult to understand how the editor of a journal, supposed to be written for "educated" people, should have allowed such a piece of stupid ignorance to have passed his scrutiny. The word "Soviet"—that seems to have mesmerised some people—simply means "Council." Every student of Russia knows that the "Council" has been an organic part of the Russian Constitution since the middle of the 16th century. But there may be another explanation of Mr. Cole's attitude. As one of the leaders of that hopeless crusade to turn back the hands of the clock (known as "The Guild System") he sees around him the ruins and the rubbish of the various experiments in this system and maybe he hopes by claiming Russia as an example of "Guildism" to arouse some new enthusiasm for further useless experiments. His hopes are built on shifting sands.

Michael Farbman, in the *Observer*, Jan. 27th, 1924, takes a more daring and dangerous line. He claims to understand Marx and Marxism, and yet makes such statements as:—



"When Lenin inaugurated the Dictatorship of the Proletariat he obviously was unhampered by the slightest hesitation or doubt as to the efficacy of Marxian principles. But the longer he tested them as a practical revolutionist and statesman the more he became aware of the impossibility of building up a society on an automatic and exclusively economic basis. When he had to adopt an agrarian policy totally at variance with his Marxian opinions, and when later he was compelled to make an appeal to the peasants' acquisitive instincts and go back to what he styled 'State Capitalism,' he was not only conscious that something was wrong with his Marxian gospel, but frankly admitted that Marx had not foreseen all the realities of a complex situation. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the greatest value of the Russian Revolution to the world Labour movement lies in the fact that it has replaced Marxism by Leninism."

The above quotation has been given at length because it not only epitomises Mr. Farbman's attitude but also that of many so-called "Socialists."

It will, therefore, be a matter of astonishment to the reader unacquainted with Marx's writings and theories to learn that almost every sentence in that paragraph either begs the question or is directly false.

In the first sentence we have two assertions. One that Lenin established the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," the other that this is a "Marxian principle." Both statements are deliberately false.

Lenin never established any "Dictatorship of the Proletariat"—whatever that may mean—but only *the Dictatorship of the Communist Party* which exists to-day.

In the whole of Marx's writing that he himself saw through the press the phrase Dictatorship of the Proletariat does not occur once! This, of course, Mr. Farbman knows well.

The next sentence contains a phrase that Mr. Farbman may know the meaning of, but which is idiotic nonsense from a Marxian standpoint. To talk of a Society "on an automatic and exclusively economic basis" is utterly in opposition to all Marxian teachings.

If Lenin ever made the statement attributed to him in the sentence that follows—"that Marx had not foreseen all the realities of a complex situation"—which is at least doubtful as no reference is given, that would only show Lenin's misreading of Marx.

But the last sentence is a gem. Not only has the Russian revolution *not* displaced Marxism by Leninism (for as showed above Marxism never existed there)—it has displaced Leninism by Capitalism.

To understand Lenin's position, both actually and historically, it is necessary to examine *the conditions* under which he came to the front. Early in 1917 it was clear to all observers that the corruption, treachery and double-dealing of the Czar and his nobles had brought about the collapse of the Army. (See M. Phillips Price "The Soviet, the Terror and Intervention," p. 15; John Reed, "Ten Days that Shook the World," etc.)

This was the most important factor in the whole Russian upheaval, and is the pivot upon which all the rest turns.

The Romanoffs and their crew had fallen from power when an efficient armed force was no longer at their disposal. Kerensky, who replaced them, tried to keep the war going without men or munitions. Lenin obtained permission to leave Switzerland for Russia and tried to stir up a revolt in March, 1917, but this failed, and he had to fly to Finland. Confusion grew, and finally it was decided to take steps to call a Constituent Assembly to draw up a new Constitution for Russia. The Bolsheviks hailed this move and loudly protested against the dilatoriness of Kerensky, who was afraid of losing office. At the same time the various Councils of peasants, workers and soldiers began to send representatives to Petrograd for an All-Russian Congress. At once a struggle began between the Kerensky section—or Mensheviks—and the Lenin section—or Bolsheviks—to obtain the majority of representation in this Assembly. For days the struggle continued and almost to the last moment the issue was in doubt, but the superior slogan of the Bolsheviks—"Peace, Bread, Land"—finally won a majority over to their side.

A day or two before this Lenin had come out of his hiding place and placed himself at the head of the Bolsheviks.

The first thing Lenin did when in office was to keep his promise. He issued a call for peace to all the belligerents on the basis of "no annexations, no indemnities." This astonished the politicians of the Western Nations to whom election promises are standing jokes.

It was at this point that Lenin made his greatest miscalculation. He believed that the working masses of the western world were so war weary that upon the call from one of the combatants they would rise and force

their various Governments to negotiate peace. Unfortunately these masses had neither the knowledge nor the organisation necessary for such a movement, and no response was given to the call, except the snarling demands of the Allies that Russia should continue to send men to be slaughtered. This lack of response was a terrible disappointment to Lenin, but, facing the situation, he opened negotiations for a separate peace with Germany. And here he made a brilliant stroke. To the horror and dismay of all the diplomatic circles in Europe he declared that the negotiations would be carried on in public, and they were. Thus exposing the stupid superstition still so beloved of Communists here, that it is impossible to conduct important negotiations in public.

Of course the conditions demanded by the Germans were hard. Again and again Lenin's followers demanded that war should be re-opened rather than accept these conditions. Radek reports a conversation (Russian Information and Review, January 26th, 1924):—

"The *mujik* must carry on the war. 'But don't you see that the *mujik* voted against the war,' Lenin answered. 'Excuse me, when and how did he vote against it?' 'He voted with his feet; he is running away from the front.'"

Large tracts of territory were detached from the Bolshevik control, and the greatest blow was the separation of the Ukraine, whose splendid fertile soil would have been of immense value for the purpose of providing food.

Still the problems to be handled were enormous. The delegates to the Constituent Assembly had gathered in Petrograd, but Lenin, who shouted so loudly for this Assembly when out of office, was not running the risk of being deposed now he was in office. He had the gathering dispersed, and refused to let the Assembly meet. Sporadic outbreaks among the peasantry were a source of continual trouble, particularly as the Bolsheviks had only a poor force at their disposal. The signing of the Armistice however solved this problem. The Communists are fond of claiming that Trotsky organised the "Red Army." This claim is absurd, for Trotsky knew nothing of military matters. The upheaval in Germany, after the signing of the Armistice, threw hundreds of German officers out of work and Lenin gladly engaged their services, at

high salaries, to organise the army. By the offer of better food rations, better clothing and warmer quarters plenty of men offered themselves for enlistment. The main difficulty however was not men but munitions.

Lenin and his supporters expected that the victorious Allies would turn their combined forces on Russia. But the Allies were so engrossed in trickery, double-dealing and swindling each other over the sharing of the plunder that they largely ignored Russia. Still to show their good will and kind intentions they subsidised a set of thieving scoundrels—Koltchak (assisted by that British hero "Colonel" John Ward), Deniken, Wrangel, Yudenitch, etc., to invade Russia for the purpose of taking it out of the control of the Russians.

It was a most hopeful undertaking, this sending in of marauding bands! The peasant, who had just got rid of his age-long enemy the landlord (sometimes rather summarily) was expected to assist in restoring that gentleman. To help them in reaching a decision, these marauding bands, with strict impartiality, plundered friend and foe alike. The only result of these various raids was to unify the mass of the people in Russia in accepting the Bolshevik rule. Slowly the Russians began to gather arms. Their army was already in good order, and although the enormous distances and lack of transport prevented them reaching many places, yet whenever the Red Army met the looting bands mentioned above the latter were defeated, with monotonous regularity.

Of course compared with the battles on the western front these engagements were mere hand skirmishes, as neither side had any heavy artillery, high-velocity shells, poison gas, nor bombing aeroplanes.

A greater enemy to Leninism than any of these gangs, however, and one which had been exerting its influence for some time, now greatly increased its pressure, this was the individualistic conditions of the peasant, combined with the wants of the townsmen. Various decrees had been passed forbidding private trading in the towns and villages (apart from special licences) but the Bolsheviks had never dared to enforce these decrees in face of the food shortage. The result of this increased pressure was the famous "New Economic Policy," that caused such consternation in the ranks of



the Communist parties. In this country Miss Sylvia Pankhurst nearly died of disgust when the news arrived.

But once more Lenin was right. He recognised the seriousness of the conditions and tried to frame a policy to fit them. His own words describe the situation with great clearness:—

"Yet, in 1921, after having emerged victoriously from the most important stages of the Civil War, Soviet Russia came face to face with a great—I believe, the greatest—internal political crisis which caused dissatisfaction, not only of the huge masses of the peasantry, but also of large numbers of workers.

"It was the first, and I hope the last, time in the history of Soviet Russia that we had the great masses of the peasantry arrayed against us, not consciously, but instinctively, as a sort of political mood.

"What was the cause of this unique, and, for us, naturally disagreeable, situation? It was caused by the fact that we had gone too far with our economic measures, that the masses were already sensing what we had not properly formulated, although we had to acknowledge a few weeks afterwards, namely, that the direct transition to pure Socialist economy, to pure Socialistic distribution of wealth, was far beyond our resources, and that if we could not make a successful and timely retreat, if we could not confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would go under." (Address to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.) (Italics ours.)

The most significant phrase in the above statement—the one we have underlined—now admits at last that Marx was right, and that the whole of the Communist "Theories and Theses" are rubbish from top to bottom.

Mr. Brailsford, the £1,000 a year, editor of "The New Leader," in the issue for January 25th, 1924 says:—

"Alone in the earthquakes of the war period, this Russian revived the heroic age, and proved what the naked will of one man may do to change the course of history."

What knowledge! What judgment! What intelligence! Where has the "course of history" changed one hair's breadth owing to Russia? And the above specimen of ignorance, that would disgrace a school child, is considered worth £1,000 a year by the I.L.P.! Doubtless the measure of their intelligence.

The chief points of Lenin's rule can now be traced out. He was the *product* of the "course of history" when the breakdown occurred in Russia. At first—nay even as late as the publication of "Left-Wing Communism" (p.44)—Lenin claimed that it was "a Socialist Revolution." He also claimed

that the Bolsheviks were establishing "Socialism" in Russia in accord with Marxian principles. Some of the shifts, and even deliberate misinterpretations of Marx's writings that Lenin indulged in to defend his unsound position have already been dealt with in past issues of the SOCIALIST STANDARD and need not detain us here. To delay the victorious Allies taking action against Russia, large sums were spent on propaganda in Europe by the Bolsheviks. "Communist" Parties sprang up like mushrooms, and now that these funds are vanishing, are dying like the same vegetable. Their policy was to stir up strife. Every strike was hailed as the "starting of the revolution." But somehow they were all "bad starts"!

When the Constituent Assembly was broken up by Lenin's orders he had the Russian Soviet Constitution drawn up. He realised that if the Bolsheviks were to retain control this new Constitution must give them full power. We have already analysed this Constitution in detail, in a previous issue, but a repetition of one point will make the essential feature clear. Clause 12 says:—

"The supreme authority in the Russian Soviet Republic is vested in the All Russia Congress of Soviets, and, during the time between the Congresses, in the Central Executive Committee."

Clause 28 says:—

"The All Russia Congress of Soviets elects the All Russia Central Executive of not more than 200 members."

Innocent enough, surely! But—yes there is a but—the credentials of the delegates to the All-Russia Congress are verified by the officials of the Communist Party and at every congress it turns out—quite by accident of course—that a large majority of the delegates are members of the Communist Party. The others are listened to politely, allowed to make long speeches, and then—voted down by the "Block." This little fact also applies to all "The Third Communist International Congresses," and to all "The International Congresses of the Red Labour Unions." No matter how many delegates the other countries may send, the Russian delegation is always larger than the rest combined.

By this "Dictatorship of the Communist Party" Lenin was able to keep power concentrated in his own hands.

Lenin made desperate efforts to induce the town workers to run the factories on disciplined lines, but despite the most rigid de-

crees these efforts were a failure. The Russian townsmen, like the peasant, has no appreciation of the value of time, and it is impossible to convert a 17th century hand worker into a modern industrial wage slave by merely pushing him into a factory and giving him a machine to attend. Lenin's experience proves the fallacy of those who proclaim that modern machines, because they are made "fool-proof" in some details, can be operated by any people, no matter how low their stage of development.

Another idea was tried. A number of minor vultures on the working class, of the I.W.W. and Anarchist "leader" type, had gone to Russia to see what could be picked up. There were 6,000,000 unemployed in America. Lenin called upon these "leaders" to arrange for the transport of numbers of mechanics and skilled labourers to form colonies in Russia, with up-to-date factories and modern machinery. These "leaders" pocketed their fees and expenses, but the colonies have yet to materialise.

Such was the position up to the time of Lenin's illness.

What then are Lenin's merits? First in order of time is the fact that he made a clarion call for a world peace. When that failed he concluded a peace for his own country. Upon this first necessary factor he established a Constitution to give him control and, with a skill and judgment unequalled by any European or American statesman, he guided Russia out of its appalling chaos into a position where the services are operating fairly for such an undeveloped country, and where, at least, hunger no longer hangs over the people's heads. Compare this with the present conditions in Eastern Europe!

Despite his claims at the beginning, he was the first to see the trend of conditions and adapt himself to these conditions. So far was he from "changing the course of history" as Brailsford ignorantly remarks that it was the course of history which changed him, drove him from one point after another till to-day Russia stands halfway on the road to capitalism. The Communists, in their ignorance, may howl at this, but Russia cannot escape her destiny. As Marx says:—

"One nation can and should learn from others. And even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement—and it is the ultimate aim of this

work to lay bare the economic law of motion of modern society—it can neither clear by bold leaps nor remove by legal enactments the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth pangs." (Preface Vol. I. "Capital.")

The Bolsheviks will probably remain in control for the simple reason that there is no one in Russia capable of taking their place. It will be a question largely as to whether they will be able to stand the strain for the task is a heavy one, and they are by no means overcrowded with capable men. But this control will actually resolve itself into control for, and in the interests of, the Capitalists who are willing to take up the development of raw materials and industry in Russia. The New Economic Policy points the way.

The peasant problem will take longer to solve because of the immense areas, and lack of means of communication. Until the capitalists develop roads and railways the peasants will, in the main, follow their present methods and habits. When these roads and railways are developed, modern agriculture will begin to appear worked at first with imported men and machines. But then Russia will be well on the road to fully developed Capitalism.

The Communists claim that Lenin was a great teacher to the working class the world over, but with singular wisdom they refrain from pointing out what that teaching was. His actions from 1917 to 1922 certainly illustrate a certain lesson that is given above, but the teacher of that lesson was Karl Marx.

J. FITZGERALD.

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**SLAVERY AND SLAVES.**

Slavery is a condition of people who are subjected, or forced, to do the bidding of other people. Subjected people are slaves; those people who dominate slaves are their masters. In the early times of savagery and barbarism, the Human Race suffered shortage of the means of subsistence; this caused the various tribes to war with each other. In these wars captives were taken, killed and in some cases eaten; hence the origin of cannibalism. In the course of time, discoveries and inventions enabled mankind to produce the means of subsistence in greater abundance, and so, it was not necessary to kill the captives taken in war.

The captured ones were kept alive and made to work for their captors; the captives became chattel slaves and were the property of their masters, known as slave holders. The masters provided their slaves with food, clothing and shelter, and so, work or no work, chattel slaves were always sure of their means of subsistence; this is an important point.

In the period of feudalism, also called the Middle Ages, chattel slavery had developed into feudal slavery, and a change in the conditions of the slaves is seen.

The feudal slaves are called serfs, or vassals; their masters were the nobles, or Barons. The serfs, or vassals, were not fed, clothed and housed by their masters, but certain land was reserved for the use of the serf and he owned his own tools; therefore, they, the serfs, were able to produce their necessities of life. An important feature of this period is that the slaves, having access to the land and owning instruments of production, were always sure of their means of subsistence, except, of course, when they suffered famine or pestilence. Also the masters protected their bond slaves against intruders. In return for these "privileges" the vassals had to give part of their time to producing the needs of their masters.

In the later stages of feudalism the system of capitalism began to rise, and in order that capitalism could exist and develop it was essential that the serfs be deprived of their means of living. Gradually, and in a brutal and forcible manner, the serfs were robbed of their means of living; and we see the feudal slaves trans-

formed into wage slaves, their masters transformed into capitalists. Karl Marx, on page 761 in "Capital," says:—

Thus the agricultural people, first forcibly expropriated from the soil, driven from their homes, turned into vagabonds, and then whipped, branded, tortured by laws grotesquely terrible, into the discipline necessary for the wage system.

On page 738 Marx deals with the transformation of the feudal slaves into wage slaves; also called freedmen.

He says:—

But, on the other hand, these new freed men became the sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their means of production, and all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of this, their expropriation is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.

Wage slaves, then, are people who have been robbed of their means of living; therefore they possess no property: neither do their masters feed, clothe nor house them.

In order to live, these slaves must sell their labour power to their masters, the capitalists, who, in return give them a wage on the average only sufficient to buy the means of subsistence whilst working. Thus it will be seen, if the wage slave cannot find work he will get no money; without money he cannot get the means of subsistence, therefore, he must slowly starve to death.

When the conditions of wage slavery are compared with the conditions of chattel and feudal slavery, an exclamation arises. What a change! Yes! and a change to the disadvantage of the wage slaves, or the working class. There are, of course, alternatives provided by the masters, viz., the workhouse, parish relief, the dole, old age pensions, and, of course, a slave can beg. The masters cause the conditions of the workhouse, and parish relief, to be such that only in very extreme cases will workers use them. The dole and the old age pensions are insufficient to provide the means of subsistence; and begging is a precarious resource. The beggar is ever under the watchful eyes of the law and often finds himself in prison for striving to exist.

During the capitalistic period inventions and discoveries have arisen whereby the working class is able to produce a vast amount of the necessities of life. But side

by side with the increase in wealth there is an increase in the want and poverty of the working class; and this is because the means of living are owned by the capitalist class. Owning the means of living this class owns all the wealth produced.

We have seen the three forms of slavery and the difference between them. The chattel and feudal slaves had to endure their bondage because they had no power with which to free themselves. But the wage slaves, although they have lost the certainty of their means of subsistence, are able to obtain the power to free themselves from slavery.

Yes, the wage slaves can obtain the power to free themselves from slavery! This power can be obtained through the vote; chattel and feudal slaves were not allowed to vote, but the wage slaves are. The power to be obtained through the vote is made manifest in an election, when the different sections of the capitalist class beg for the votes of the workers in order to get into power. It is a strange thing, that the working class have the means at hand to gain their freedom and yet they use those means to put their masters into Parliament. Remarkable! By such action the wage slaves of to-day tighten the bonds of their slavery. Of course, it is obvious, the working class would not return their masters to power if they understood their slave position. How then can the workers overcome their political ignorance? By studying Socialism.

This article is a short survey of the development of slavery and slaves, and is a part of the knowledge of a Socialist. It is through studying the history of the Human Race that Socialists understand the cause of the unhappy lot of their class—the working class—and know, that the only remedy for the ills of their class is—Socialism. C.

**BOLSHEVISM AND THE RUSSIAN PEASANTS.**

In the early days of the Bolshevik régime, when we were giving Bolsheviks full credit for the magnificent efforts they were making on behalf of the working class, we met with violent abuse from many 100 per cent. revolutionaries, who, fresh from supporting the war, had just discovered that Kerensky

whom they hailed was no better than President Wilson whom they hailed before him.

They were unable to understand that it is not wise, nor even helpful, to credit men with actions which are in the nature of the case impossible. We said then that, with the best will in the world, the Bolsheviks could not establish Socialism in Russia; certain other things they could do and did do. In particular we said that the peasants, the great majority, did not understand Socialism, and did not want it. It was also quite apparent that nothing fundamental could be done without their consent.

The Soviet Government was, of course, concentrating on Socialist propaganda, but apart from the fact that the most definite want felt by the peasants was satisfied by the acquisition of land, the Bolsheviks were also faced with the difficulty of reaching people who in the main could not read.

This enormous obstacle was airily disposed of by our critics, and we were often assured that the Bolsheviks had done in a few months what could not be done in this country by years of persistent propaganda.

It is, therefore, of interest to learn just how much has really been accomplished. The following extract is from a report of a recent congress on "The Peasant Press" contained in Russian Information and Review (January 12th, 1924):—

"Throughout the R.S.F.S.R. there are only 32 regional peasant newspapers, with a circulation of 115,000; 39 county newspapers, with a circulation of 50,000; and the Moscow *Biednota*, with a circulation of 45,000."

Thus, after 6 years of State aided propaganda, only 1 peasant household out of every 100 takes a copy of a newspaper.

Hopes are entertained that by 1925 this circulation can be multiplied 10 times, so that 1 household in 10 will receive a copy.

Consideration of these figures will show what work has to be done and how incredibly foolish were those who in 1917 and 1918 believed that the establishment of Socialism in Russia was even imminent. H.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

MARCH



1924

**PEACE AT ANY PRICE!**

On February 12th Mr. Ramsay MacDonald made his first speech in Parliament as Prime Minister. The *Daily News*, commenting on the policy outlined in this speech, made reassuring remarks directed to those who feared revolutionary action might be taken by the "Labour" Government.

"The proposals put forward in general terms by the Prime Minister are such as any liberal-minded man should welcome sympathetically and without misgiving. . . . The vast problem of unemployment is not to be approached by dangerous short cuts, necessitating 'the diminution of industrial capital,' but through a policy aiming first and foremost at the restoration of trade." (*Daily News*, 13.2.24.)

The view of this Capitalist paper is quite sound, the Capitalists have no need to fear any radical change in their profit-making system whilst the Labour Party occupy the seat of power. In fact, the former can congratulate themselves at being relieved of some awkward jobs. The strike on the railways threatened to interfere seriously with business, so the Labour Government stepped in and was instrumental in settling the strike. At the moment of writing a dock strike has been declared and the Labour Government are again moving in the matter. The aim of the Government is to "settle" strikes as they are so "inconvenient" to a newly elected "Labour" Government. The outlook of the Government in such

questions is suggested by the following quotation:

"The Minister of Labour (Mr. Tom Shaw) says: 'The proposals of the Government to overtake shortage of some types of building trade labour are not in any sense intended as an attack upon either the trade unions or the employers. The object of the Government is to secure goodwill and co-operation.'" (*Daily News*, 4.2.24.)

This benevolent neutrality; this desire for "heavenly harmony" between the robbers and the robbed can hardly be supported as a sound outlook, on the part of the self-styled representatives of the working class, by the staunchest supporter of the Labour Party, unless such a supporter is outside the ranks of the workers.

The Editor of the *New Leader* laments the occurrence of the strikes and hopes for speedy settlement of the dock dispute. His comments are so instructive as an instance of the Labour Government's outlook that they are worth quoting:—

"It is well that the railway strike is over, but our congratulations on this event go primarily to the mediators of the General Council who worked so patiently for peace. Whether the men have gained anything which they might not have won without a strike seems doubtful. Their gain in any event is a small thing to set off against the moral and material damage of this conflict."

After referring to the dissensions of the Railway Unions the editor goes on:—

"Another of them underlies the threatened dock strike. Again, the competition of two Unions and two sets of leaders have brought upon us the tactics of emulation, and here also they may involve a stoppage of national trade which would thwart the efforts of the Labour Government to deal with unemployment."

"In this case, however, we are confronting one of the tragedies of industrial life, and the whole movement, political and industrial, will back the demand for a prompt solution. The more hopeful way is, however, as George Lansbury argued last week, to tackle the problem of casual labour at the Docks and to aim at the guaranteed week."

"Mr. Bevin has allowed a little more time than Mr. Bromley did for mediation, and the openings for diplomacy are in this case wider. A way out must be found. Nothing would end the experiment of a Labour administration so surely as an epidemic of hasty strikes." (*New Leader*, 1.2.24.)

Could Lloyd-George speak fairer—on behalf of the masters? The writer of the above can well afford to talk calmly of "mediation" and hasty strikes; he gets £1,000 a year for his editorship. If the railway man and the docker were in a similar position perhaps they also would not desire to "thwart the efforts of the Labour Government." Note the refrain that is becoming the common inducement to "let

things remain as they are"; sit tight and in semi-starvation until the Labour Government have had a chance! Don't embarrass them by action to increase wages or for better conditions!

**THE STRUGGLE FOR MARKETS.**

In January, 1924, the *Manchester Guardian* quoted an Exchange Washington message as saying, "Following a Conference with oil owners, President Coolidge has ordered two battleships to proceed to Mexico."

It has been stated that the United States of America came into the great war to fight for, besides other things, the rights of small nations. The knowledge obtained in the great war about such rights, as can be seen from the above telegram, has now been put to practical use by President Coolidge. That the U.S.A. President has consulted American owners of oil wells in Mexico, instead of representatives of the Mexican people, is probably not an oversight on the President's part. A person so high up as the U.S.A. President, cannot be expected to consult a low down greaser as to what is good for him. Other messages from the same source as the above telegram, state: "A squadron of the U.S.A. Navy has been sent to scare the rebels from blockading the oil port of Tampico," and again, "It is understood that American troops are destined for the Gulf and oilfields, where extensive foreign interests were recently invaded by Huertaists."

That these foreign interests happen to coincide with the interests of the American Standard Oil Co. is probably a happy accident. One more phase in the struggle between the Standard Oil Co. of America and the Royal Dutch Shell is being fought out in this struggle for the exploitation rights of the Mexican oil wells.

Further Exchange Washington messages state: "That the U.S.A. have allowed armaments to be sold to Gen. Obregon's troops, and have placed an embargo on the supply of munitions to the enemy," who is in this case Gen. de la Huerta. "Gen. Obregon's troops have been allowed to march on American soil in order to outmanoeuvre the enemy." The violation of American soil by foreign troops does not seem to have scared America's patriots. Patriotism and the large dividends which

the American Standard Oil Co. have given to its investors, evidently in this case, go hand in hand. This, however, is in the U.S.A., where, as every Englishman knows, graft, big business and Government go together. In England there has been a change of Government. The late Tory Government persistently refused to recognise Soviet Russia. The first plank in the new Labour Government's programme, and which they have already carried out, was the recognition of Soviet Russia. That Russia has possession of oilfields, which, if concessions could be obtained for their exploitation, would be the means of obtaining a monopoly in the future, as well as huge profits which follow; that Russia is a possible huge market for British textile goods; that Russia has an abundance of raw materials which could be manufactured in Great Britain is only incidental to the fact that though leading members of the present Government have denounced Soviet rule in the past, they have now condescended to shake hands with murder, as the *Daily Mail* once had it.

The *Manchester Guardian*, the organ of the British textile industrialists, has for months past advocated the full recognition of Russia. It advised the Liberal and Labour Parties to come together for this end. This has come about. Leslie Urquhart, Chairman of the Russian Asiatic Corporation, has, as was pointed out in the *Leader*, of our November issue, largely blamed the late Tory Government for his failure to obtain favourable concessions from Russia, for his Company. England has beaten other countries in the diplomatic recognition of Russia, in its haste to obtain first chance in the Russian market.

The prospect of a large market for British goods and the possibility of concessions to exploit the Russian workers and mineral wealth of Russia has been too much for the cupidity of the Capitalist class.

Can it be that big business does influence Government policy in England?

The scramble for markets is becoming ever keener. For the markets that now exist are becoming less able to swallow the gigantic output of modern industrial production. More, and more, countries are becoming competitors for the markets that at present exist. In the East, India and China are gradually becoming sufficiently industrialised to produce enough goods



for their own needs. Japan, having a superabundance of goods, which it desires to get rid of, has long since begun a policy of annexing suitable territories in which it can dump its goods. In the Chinese market Japan has come up against other countries on the same game, namely America and England. A consortium of powers had to be formed in order to prevent war, and if possible, to divide the spoils equally.

Force will soon be the only method by which these countries can dominate markets.

To use force means war; on the other hand, unless markets are found under the present system, it means greater unemployment and poverty for you English fellow worker. Out of the two evils which are you to choose? Choose neither of them, fellow worker; instead, study the principles of the Socialist Party on the back page. If you understand and approve of them join the Party and help us to eliminate war, unemployment and other evils which are the result of the Capitalist system in which we live.

H. A.

### A PERSONAL CHIN-WAG.

Perhaps you think that Socialists are a group of selfish people who are envious of the riches of other folk. Perhaps you think even worse things. Let us make a voyage of inquiry together.

You and I, and others like us, go to work. Some are employed in one way, some in another. Between us we produce and distribute the things we eat, the things we wear, the buildings we live in, and those we work in; the ships and railways that carry the things we make are made and worked by people like us; furniture and ornaments, even the most luxurious, are made by people like us. If you and I and people like us were to die to-morrow, all production and distribution of goods would cease.

Who then are we who are so necessary to the world, and are yet so poor? We are those who go to work. But why do we go to work when there are others, Rockefeller and Rothschild for instance, who do not go to work? We go to work to get wages to buy the things we need; Rockefeller and Rothschild do not go to work for wages because they have the means to get the things they need without having to wait for wages.

From whom do we obtain the wages that are so necessary for our present existence? From Rockefeller and Rothschild and people like them. But where do the Rothschilds get the means to pay us our wages? I want you to consider the answer very carefully as it will give you the key to many problems that may puzzle you. As it is so important I will make a separate paragraph of it.

A moment or two ago I said that you and I and others like us produce and distribute all the things that are necessary to keep the people of the world alive, and to enable them to enjoy themselves. I did not use exactly the same words as I am using now, but the meaning was the same. Rockefeller and Rothschild and people like them employ us, pay us wages, for producing all these necessary goods. With the wages we receive we buy back a portion of the goods we have produced. Before going any further, I would ask you to remember, lest someone should attempt to mislead you, that we also produce the gold, the coin and the paper that make up all forms of money. Let us continue.

We buy back some of the goods we produce. The rest of the goods we produce is either taken by our employers for their personal use, or is used, like new machinery and new factories, to enlarge the capacity for future production, to carry on wars, and for other similar purposes. It is because we work, but do not consume all we produce, that Rothschild and others like him can live without working. They are able to take what we produce because they own all the means for producing and distributing wealth.

The employers are in one special class and we are in another. They belong to the class of property-owners, we belong to the class of propertyless. They look at things in a different way from what we do. When we apply for work we endeavour to obtain as high a wage as we can; they endeavour to pay as low a wage as we will take. The lower the wages they pay us, the greater, as a rule, will be the wealth going to them. You will see that this arises from the nature of the system in which we live.

You are sometimes told that we are poor because of unjust taxation or because we do not work hard enough. Do not accept such a view. We are poor because, as I mentioned above, we are robbed of the

greater part of the goods we produce. We are robbed when we receive our wages because we are given back as wages only a fraction of the wealth we have produced. Our wages, as you must know so well, represent little more than will keep us and our families alive. We have nothing to spare which can be robbed from us afterwards. They who rob us are the people who own the means of wealth production and distribution.

You have heard put very shortly, but perhaps in a way that will help you to fill in what I have not had space to mention, what your position is to-day. What then, you may ask, is the remedy for such an evil state of affairs. I will answer you with one word, Socialism. Now you will wonder what Socialism is. I will tell you.

To-day with the assistance of nature you produce what is necessary for society's existence, but this wealth is owned by your masters, as they own the means by which wealth is produced. They own these things first of all because they stole them from you, and secondly because you give them the power to retain this ownership by voting them into Parliament. Police, Army, Navy, Air Force, Courts of Justice, and so forth, are all controlled through Parliament, and they are all used to help your master to keep his hold of the means of wealth production.

To-morrow, if you wish, you can obtain control of the means of production, and arrange the affairs of society so that all those who are able shall take an equal part in producing wealth and all who live shall have an equal right to receive the best that society can give. This is Socialism. What! do you say it is impossible? But if the majority of working men make up their minds that *it shall be*, then Socialism will be here as soon as you have appointed delegates and sent them to Parliament with instructions to take the necessary steps to bring in Socialism.

GILMAC.

### BY THE WAY.

What abundant evidence in various forms obtrudes itself upon us in the daily press and other journals to prove our contention, that, as the Capitalist system develops, the gulf between the working class and the Capitalist class must ever become wider and deeper. At one end of the social scale we have insensate luxury, at the other sordid

and sickening misery such as indicated in the following reports:—

"Sir Richard and the Hon. Lady Musgrave have left for Paris en route for the Riviera, and from there will go to Egypt, where they will spend the remainder of the winter.

"The Hon. Ernest and Mrs. Guinness are shortly returning to England from a cruise round the world on their yacht, on which they took a party of young people." (*Westminster Gazette*, 8.1.24).

By no means isolated instances, the more expensive pictorials are filled with the escapades of these wealthy idlers to whom the world is a beautiful hunting ground of pleasure, where they chase the seasons and live out their useless lives. If such is the lot of these social drones, what of the workers, the class who make possible their enjoyment? The following are striking contrasts:—

"At last night's meeting of the Fulham Public Health Committee it was reported that a husband and wife and five children had been occupying one room for five years. Several of the family had tuberculosis." (*Same page, same date, Westminster Gazette*, 8.1.24.)

"Three millions of our people, men, women and children, are festering and rotting in slums, living three and four in a room, huddled together, the healthy in close contact with the diseased, in tenements where neither the woman in childbirth, the sick, or the dying, can be given the ordinary decencies of life." (Mr. C. A. McCurdy, *Daily Chronicle*, 8.9.23.)

The object of these quotations is not to arouse a sentimental sympathy, useless by itself, but to urge the non-Socialist reader to study our position in order that he or she may join with us to help achieve our object, a system, in which the enjoyment of life will not be based upon the misery of others.

\* \* \*

"I am opposed to Socialism. I believe in the liberty of the individual and the Britishers' constitutional right to be a free man." (Sir Robert Aske, *Morning Post*, 14.1.24.)

"I believe in my heart it is a God-given opportunity that the Labour movement of this country has to-day to stave off upheaval in India. . . . We want India to be the brightest jewel in the great British federation of free peoples." (George Lansbury, quoted *Democrat*, 12.1.24.)

What a charming coincidence! Two "great" minds with but a single thought—and both wrong: For—"they are not free that mock their chains," even if those chains be the invisible ones of wage slavery. If, 'tis true, "He is the freeman whom the truth makes free," alas! how many slaves must be!

\* \* \*

The Capitalist need for raw material and



markets often expresses itself in a burning desire to be friendly and restore to more stable industrial conditions a former enemy country.

Such a face-about attitude amazed many unthinking workers when the canting war cry of "never again" trading with Germany was converted into appeals for merciful treatment to aid her recovery. An analogous position presents itself with regard to Russia, the possibility of exploiting the vast mineral resources and the potential market existing in such a country makes our masters yearn to "restore trade relations":—

"There are many who have loudly declared that 'they will not shake hands with murderers,' but are quite aware of the advantages which might ensue from the murderers' hands being shaken." (*Time and Tide*, 8.2.24.)

This oft repeated assertion placed the Capitalists in the humiliating position of having to eat their own words and expose their hypocrisy if they themselves were to negotiate with Russia on supposed friendly terms. But the opportunity arose of a compromise that would allow of government by the Labour Party. The latter have proved their readiness to serve Capitalist interests, as past numbers of the *Socialist Standard* have shown, so it was not surprising to find them ready to undertake the dirty work of the master class on this occasion—for a price—the fruits of office. Under cover of "Our first Labour Government" they could arrange a "friendly" Anglo-Russian Conference and present a labour veiled appeal to M. Poincaré for "Honour among thieves," moves which have already received blessing and approbation from the Capitalist Press.

Another reason in favour of the Capitalists helping the Labour Party to office, despite the stage thunder of their pretended opposition, is the inevitable failure of such a Party, elected as it is upon a re-hash of Liberal reforms, to solve any working class questions by action that will adversely affect Capitalists' interests; not without reason has the Capitalist Press reiterated with wearying monotony the lie that the Labour Party is a Socialist Party, for they anticipate that when the hopes of the trusting workers fail to materialise they will be able to discredit Socialism in their eyes; we claim that while the working class do not understand Socialism, they will, under what-

ever guise or name, continue to support Capitalism as the only system they believe possible. To abandon one incorrect position to take up another equally unsound—or the same position with but a change of name, leaves the workers—as they were.

\* \* \*

"I am quite satisfied that a lot of the housing trouble is caused through young women staying at home instead of going into domestic service." (Judge Crawford, Southend County Court, *Daily Chronicle*, 11.2.24.)

Such self satisfaction does not require proof or precision of statement. That might mean admitting that it is reserved for the daughters of the working class to enjoy the delights of domestic drudgery.

Our learned beak has also run a very great risk of being called to order for grossly insulting the young ladies of the "Upper Ten," who might feel hurt by being included among those who bring this trouble (*sic*) upon us by refusing to be slaveys. Alas! it is the workers who build both the mansion and the slum, but while they remain content to be servants, domestic or industrial, to a class they wrongly think they could not live without, they will accommodate that class with luxuriously appointed residences, while permitting themselves to be herded in sunless barracks and foul smelling jerry built shelters. Housing problems have no separate existence from other working class problems. They will be solved when that class undertakes the task itself instead of waiting for "somebody to do something." MAC.

### THE COMMUNIST WRECKERS.

Towards the end of the war there was a small but growing body of workers who viewed with ever greater disgust the Labour Party, which they had previously supported. These Trade Unionists who had been tricked into enthusiastic approval of the war by appeals to their patriotism and to their natural sympathy for "defenceless" Belgium, had had their suspicions roused by shameless profiteering at home, and by rumours of secret treaties between the Allies. The discontent was fanned by the daring seizure of power by the Bolsheviks.

The workers found themselves gagged and blindfolded by D.O.R.A., bound in industrial conscription and flung into the war machine. They saw all the liberties for

which they were asked to fight taken from them, and the armed forces used to intimidate men at home who made spasmodic efforts to retain some few of their hardly won safeguards against workshop tyranny. When the war ceased and the soldiers returned, discontent grew in spite of attempts to set ex-Service men against the rest. They were beginning to think, and their anger was turning against the leaders and the policy of the Party which had betrayed them; against the Clynes's and Thomases who had sold them for honours and turned the Labour Party into a recruiting machine, and against the minor officials of the Trade Unions who had bought immunity from military service themselves by defending and assisting the better known labour leaders in the work they were doing for successive Capitalist Governments. The workers were slowly groping their way to a realisation that these patriotic braggarts who were hand-in-glove with the ruling class were not fit and proper guides for the workers in their struggles; and always fresh evidence was forthcoming in campaigns for increased production, for making Germany pay, etc., led by Labour men. (It is interesting to note that Clynes is still an unrepentant advocate of increased production in spite of our 1½ million unemployed. See *Current Opinion*, Jan., 1924.)

Here then was material for the building up of a really powerful revolutionary movement; but out of this ferment we got, instead, the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Worshipping, without troubling to understand, the very real achievements of the Bolsheviks, the leaders of this Party trumpeted forth their supposedly brand-new principles of working class action.

To hell with that "bourgeois shibboleth" Democracy! Hail the "Dictatorship" and revolution by a minority of intellectuals! Down with Parliament; "the Soviet form of government" is the "historically necessary form of this dictatorship." (Statutes of Communist International, August, 1920.) Let us prepare for the armed struggle, let us form communist groups in the army and navy. War to the death against Henderson and Clynes and all the "lackeys of the Bourgeoisie."

We, poor hidebound creatures, thinking that Socialist propaganda was still useful and necessary, were "cave-men"; we were

stranded on the mud-flats of "Bourgeois ideology" (what a godsend that word "Bourgeois" was to the ranter as a cover for his ignorance of Socialist principles); we did not move with the times, and were unaware that Capitalism had crashed about our ears, and that we were plump in the midst of a "revolutionary situation." In short, they were sorry for us, but we were simply played out.

So they had their glorious fling. In the joyful exuberance of youth these blind dreamers preached the necessity of "living dangerously"; they tickled themselves nearly to death with thrilling conspiracies and landed many of their followers needlessly in jail (usually themselves keeping well within the laws of that "myth" parliament.) They planned insurrections and drilled with broomsticks in secret places. They opposed MacDonald and Morgan Jones at bye-elections, furiously denouncing them for their infamy and frightening nobody but the ignorant and nervous readers of the *Morning Post*. They went about preaching Sovietism and did great harm by butting in with this propaganda whenever an industrial dispute occurred. Each succeeding strike or lock-out was without hesitation (or thought) greeted as the revolutionary crisis, and as each passed without their hopes being fulfilled so their wrath against the criminality of labour leaders became more violent and uncontrollable.

They organised spectacular boycotts of the export of arms for wars in Russia and Ireland with "terrific" success. The boycotts only failed in the quite minor respect that the arms went through. (*Communist*, October 7th, 1920.)

They helped to organise the unemployed and were even more disastrously futile. This is their own estimate of their work:—

"The unemployed have done all they can, and the Government know it. They have tramped through the rain in endless processions. They have gone in mass deputations to the Guardians. They have attended innumerable meetings and been told to be 'solid.' They have marched to London, enduring terrible hardships. . . . All this has led to nowhere. . . . In weariness and bitter disillusionment, the unemployed movement is turning in upon itself. . . ." (*Workers' Weekly*, Feb. 10th, 1923.)

Consistent only in failure, the Communists were forced to find fresh stunts to hold the attention that their plentiful supplies of money had won for them.



In due course they were ordered to stage the "United Front" farce. They had to eat their bold words and line up with "Capitalist flunkeys" in the Labour Party. They had to prove themselves constitutionalists in spite of all their brave speeches, and had to humble themselves at the feet of Henderson and Ramsay MacDonald. It is only fair to say that some at least of them did so with every sign of shame; they excused themselves by saying that they wanted to "shake Henderson's hand only in order to get hold of his throat."

Later still all pretence was dropped and at the 1923 elections we find quite a number of Communists running as official Labour candidates. We find Mr. W. Paul, sometime firebrand, going to the poll with an election address graced by a message from Ramsay MacDonald (*Socialist*, Jan., 1924). We have these erstwhile Bolsheviks who were once too revolutionary to shake the "bloody hands" of the "Social patriots," boasting of having given unqualified support to the worst of them, to Thomas, Clynes, and the rest. We have Harry Pollitt, writing in the *Workers' Weekly* (Dec. 21st, 1923) to expose the latest trickery of Frank Hodges, and confessing that "we did not expose Mr. Hodges during the Election because we did not desire to split the workers' vote. . .". His article has a postscript, "Miners, away with this man!" Does Pollitt think that Frank Hodges cares twopence about people who keep their exposures until after the Election? He is now Civil Lord of the Admiralty and can snap his fingers at the people who might, had they known him, have checked his career at the polling booth. His power to do harm to the workers was increased by the deliberate action of these Communists. Do they anticipate that Frank Hodges will now organise "Communist nuclei" in the ranks of the men of the Navy?

And what has happened to the Soviets? You will search their Election literature in vain to find mention of Soviets now. They, with minority action and armed insurrection, have gone into the discard with other of their "brand-new" principles, which were really very old. Tom Bell, Editor of the *Communist Review*, an official C.P. organ (Jan., 1924), comments on the Election and jettisons almost all the remainder of them.

"The advent of a Labour Government, even of a Liberal type, would nevertheless be a matter

of tremendous importance in world politics. For one thing, it would help to spread confusion in the camp of the swashbuckling reactionaries now rampant in Middle Europe. This, in turn, may open a period of democratic pacifism, which would have the effect of stupefying such large masses of the working class, instinctively yearning for peace, as to postpone any revolutionary action for a decade, and certainly once the workers are affected by the illusions of pacifism and reformism, and that upon an international scale, Capitalism throughout Europe may very well strengthen its position. A Labour Government, therefore, in Great Britain, especially supported by Liberalism, with its repercussions on the Continent, and particularly on that of the social democratic elements in Germany, might conceivably give rise to that era of 'Wilsonism' predicted by Comrade Trotsky at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. That is a prospect to which we Communists cannot shut our eyes and ignore."

We, who were "behind the times," observe with some bewilderment Communists assisting into power a Labour Government, which may have the effect of "strengthening Capitalism" and postponing "any revolutionary action for a decade."

After affirming that "MacDonald, Webb and the other Fabian leaders of the Party will strike the road of 'Wilsonism.'" Tom Bell goes on to say that:—

"As things are, the proletarian opposition to the Fabianism of MacDonald, Webb and the dominant Parliamentary leadership falls to Wheatley, Maxton, Johnston, Kirkwood, and the other proletarian element."

who, he says, are

"already committed to the policy of a fight to a finish with Capitalism."

It is cheering to know that working class interests are in such safe keeping. Wheatley, the Jesuit, who, according to his Election address, sees the cause of our troubles in our not having "an unselfish ruling class," and who wants to lead us "along a safe and sane course" of the Labour Party, which is going to benefit "shopkeepers and every other class"; Maxton, whose Election address proclaims higher wages as the solution for unemployment, and who seeks to divide the workers on the Capitalist demand for Scottish Home Rule; Johnston, who condemns repudiation of financial obligations to bond holders entered into by Capitalist Governments as "dishonesty" (*Forward*, Feb. 11th, 1922); dishonest to expropriate the robber class! Kirkwood, who at the Election also promised prosperity to "merchants and manufacturers" and "every other class." (Election address.) These are the broken

reeds on whom the Communists tell you to depend. Is their present advice more reliable than their past action would lead you to expect? In the *Workers' Weekly* (Jan. 11th, 1924) Albert H. Hawkins, a C.P. official writes as follows:—

"In the December issues of the *Communist Review* and *Labour Monthly*, no fewer than four members of the Party E. C. attempted to explain the underlying causes of the General Election, and each one had a different explanation. This tragedy was only surpassed by the greater tragedy that very few Party members appeared to notice the confusion of thought. It would appear that we are losing the arts of political discussion and criticism."

Not one God but four Gods; not one United Front, but four United Fronts!

And these are the "intelligent minority," the men of "first class brains" who were to be your heaven-sent guides.

In these few years they have revived a number of long-rejected policies and proved their futility once again; they have multiplied confusion in the ranks of the working class and boxed the political compass; and worst of all they have rallied the growing mass of discontented workers, led them up half a dozen blind alleys and then manœuvred them back to where they were in 1919, in the *Labour Party*. As the *Daily News* says (Dec. 10th, 1923), for the Labour Party to keep these elements where they can do no more harm is a "laudable and valuable service." This Capitalist journal ought, however, if it would be fair, to give some of the credit to the leaders of the Communist Party of Great Britain, who, seeing that all of their candidates failed to get in, have so far been very inadequately rewarded for their unconscious services to the Capitalist class. H.

### "AND THEREIN LIES OUR STRENGTH."

From a pamphlet issued by the Independent Labour Party, entitled "All About the I.L.P.," we learn the following:

"It is sometimes charged against the I.L.P. that it has never formulated its theory of Socialism. That is true, and therein lies its strength."—Page 5, third para.

Now, one of the fundamental truths which a study of Socialism teaches, and it is a basic principle, is the existence of the class struggle. This class struggle is based upon the antagonism of interests between

the propertyless working class, who are forced to sell their energy in order to live, and the property-owning master class. The Independent Labour Party have always denied the existence of this class struggle. And why? Because it would mean antagonising their respectable radical and self-styled democratic petty bourgeois following, who supply in the main the funds of the Party, "and therein lies its strength."

After all, organising the workers for Socialism is a pretty profitless job; extracting the coppers from their pockets for this object—and this object alone—we have found to be a very stiff job.

For further evidence of I.L.P. confusion and treachery, we commend our readers to peruse pages 6, 7, 8 of our Party Manifesto. Therein they will also read the object of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, together with the Declaration of Principles which act as the guide for the attainment of that object. We stand or fall by these declarations . . . "and therein lies our strength."

O. C. I.

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**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Noel Park School, N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.**

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Leytonstone, The Green Man, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:** Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Friday:** Stratford, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Baths), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Edmonton, The Green, 8 p.m.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, APRIL, 1924.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## FAKE LABOUR GOVERNMENT. THE PUPPET SHOW.

The workers, the producers of wealth, are poor because they are robbed; they are robbed because they may not use the machinery of wealth production except on terms dictated by the owners, the propertied class. The remedy for working class poverty and other social ills is the transfer of ownership of these means of production from the Capital Class to society. That, in a few words, is the case for Socialism.

The work of rebuilding society on this new basis cannot be started until power is in the hands of a Socialist working class, and that cannot be until many millions have been convinced of the need for change and are broadly agreed on the way to set to work to bring it about.

It is just here that the Socialist meets with an objection which is in appearance reasonable enough. Many who would accept the foregoing remarks can go with us no further.

Is it not better, they say, in view of the certainty that Socialism cannot be introduced at once, to devote much, if not all, our energy to making the best of Capitalism, and getting "something now"? By "something now" they mean higher wages, increased State protection against destitution through illness or unemployment, and other like proposals. It may then come as a surprise to them that we also believe in getting something now. We differ in that we are not willing to subordinate Socialist propaganda to the demand for reforms of Capitalism, and in that we strongly hold that the best way to get these things is by the revolutionary

activity of an organisation of revolutionaries. In other words, the quickest and easiest method of getting reforms from the ruling class is to let them see that it will endanger their position to refuse.

While we recognise that Socialism is the only permanent solution, we are not among those who consider that the Capitalists are simply unable to afford better conditions for the workers. A comparison between the total income from property, and the petty cost of doles and relief, shows the falsity of that somewhat common notion. On the one hand the workers would, if they ceased to struggle, soon find that there is still room for a worsening of their conditions, and on the other hand were they free from the mental blindness which prevents them from striking a blow when and where it would be most damaging, they might, even within Capitalism, raise their standard of living and diminish their insecurity. Unfortunately they do not yet see the brutal facts of the class struggle, and too often allow themselves to be paralysed in action by their belief in the supposed community of interest between them and their exploiters, by their response to every deceitful appeal in the name of patriotism, and by their lack of confidence in their own powers and intelligence. They will put up a straight fight against their employers, but they have not yet seen through the more subtle hostility of the newspapers, the politicians, and all the other defenders of the employing class who pose as neutrals because it makes their influence more deadly. The employers and their hired de-



fenders know well enough that your gain is often their loss, and they therefore have good reason to persuade you not to seize the opportunities that offer of raising your wages or reducing your hours. But many who talk about the beauties of an "advanced programme of social reforms" seem not to have realised that if such things are to be of any worth to you they necessitate at first the dipping into the profits of the other class. Various well-meaning persons may preach arbitration and conciliation, but you know well enough that sweet words do not, as a rule, charm employers into giving higher wages. They will not give up any part of what they hold except under pressure. One kind of pressure is fear; the fear that refusal to spend part of their wealth on reforms will encourage revolutionary agitation for the seizure of the whole. There is supposed to be another way of getting "something now." It is to assist into office a non-revolutionary party like the Labour Party.

It is pleaded at the moment on that Party's behalf that it is "in office but not in power," and that its weaknesses arise from that one fact due to causes beyond its control. Within limits this is true, but why in such circumstances was office accepted? It can hardly be questioned that an official opposition, 192 strong, bent on hampering the Government, could have influenced legislation not less than when actually in office. In fact, however, the Labour Party was not free to choose. It dared not refuse office; it dare not while in office attack the roots of Capitalist privilege, and had it continued in opposition to Baldwin's Government it would not have dared to obstruct as a means of compelling the granting of concessions. The reasons for its impotence in each of these situations are the same. Its programme and policy, its supporters, the basis of its organisation, and the ground upon which it chose to fight elections all combined to commit it to the administering of Capitalism as distinct from treating the present opportunity merely as a prelude to the fight for Socialism.

From the circumstance that the bulk of the members of the Labour Party do not accept Socialism as a present political issue, but at best only as a hope for the future, it would be plainly suicidal for them to talk of throwing down a challenge to the

Capitalist Class. The only alternative is to do as the Labour Party are trying to do. They are trying to run the Capitalist system better than the older parties have done.

We can readily concede that as administrators the Labour men will prove themselves no less intelligent and capable than their predecessors, and probably more receptive of new ideas and methods than the men who made and mismanaged the war.

But the essence of our opposition to this policy is that except in quite minor respects there is only one way of administering Capitalism—the Capitalist way. Ultimately it is the economic organisation of society which dictates the broad lines of policy and breaks those who ignore them. The problems which present themselves for settlement, such as war, unemployment, poverty, arise from the very nature of the present social system. They may be dealt with in more than one way, but they cannot be treated in a manner satisfactory to the workers without first destroying Capitalism.

Support of the unemployed at comparatively trifling cost is, from the Capitalist viewpoint, a solution of the unemployment problem. Their problem is to avoid the risk of riot and revolt and their policy succeeds. War is but an extension of ordinary commercial competition, and poverty is both the effect and the necessary condition of capitalist wealth and monopoly.

Even where a Labour Government is able to introduce certain alleviations, these must be paid for in the sacrifice of political independence. The removal of the "Gap" is the price of consent to plans of the Conservative majority for the Navy and Air Force. To argue that these objectionable measures would have been carried through by the last or any other Capitalist Government misses the point of our criticism. Capitalism produces certain evils. These evils have, by their persistence, discredited three Governments since 1918. A Labour Government which seeks to carry on is certain not to be able to remove the evils, and under the added embarrassment of having roused high hopes, will be discredited, too, and the unhappy sequel will be that those who openly defend the present system will with some show of reason instance the failure of the Labour Party as proof that there is no

solution, and many of the Labour men will drift or be forced into offering the same defence themselves.

It is to the general situation and not to the weakness or cowardice of individuals that we must look for an explanation of the actions of the Labour Government, many of which have already given obvious displeasure to their more advanced supporters.

Their term began with a strike of locomotive men, who, despite their solidarity, were compelled to accept wage reductions. So far from intervening to obtain "something now" for the strikers, Mr. MacDonald appointed as Colonial Secretary Mr. J. H. Thomas, who quite openly condemned them and hoped and intrigued for their defeat.

The miners, too, are putting forward a demand that their wages be raised to the 1914 standard, but the Editor of the *Labour Magazine* (January, 1924), an official Labour Party organ, can offer them no better assistance than an appeal in the following terms:—"We are sure that the miners will not embarrass the first Labour Government by pressing untimely demands."

It would appear at least reasonable for the miners to receive slightly more than a starvation wage before the non-producers who own the mines should be allowed to draw their millions of pounds of profits. Even if the Labour Party, like MacDonald, are definitely committed to retaining the profit-making system, it cannot be doubted that they would, if they conveniently could, raise the miners wages; but because they are "administering capitalism" such a demand is of necessity an "untimely" one. What the miners get, even if it be given legislative endorsement, will be the result of their own organisation and action.

When the Dockers came out on strike for increases which were generally admitted even by some of the Dock employers to be long overdue, the Government had mails unloaded by Naval ratings and had made all preparations for unloading foodstuffs, etc., had the strike continued. This does not necessarily imply on their part a positive wish to break the strike. What it does mean is that this is one of the duties inevitably forced upon those, whatever their beliefs, who would undertake to administer Capitalism.

The strike had to be ended or countered. If the Labour Government had refused to act it would have forfeited the right to govern. Through Mr. Shaw, therefore, pressure was brought to bear on the Dockers' representatives to accept certain terms which were actually slightly worse than those finally granted by the employers.

"It was stated yesterday that the settlement terms follow the 'private suggestion' made by the Minister of Labour last week, with the exception that July instead of June was first proposed for the operation of the second shilling increase." (*Daily News*, 22 Feb., 1924.)

As for the nature of the "private suggestion" referred to; the *Worker* (March 1st) quotes as follows from Mr. Bevin's speech to the delegates:—

"The Government is responsible for the moving of the mails. They have refrained from using soldiers, naval ratings, blacklegs or force of any kind. But they are being driven up against it, and soon will have to take the choice of exercising their powers or going out of office. That was the choice, and there is no need to beat about the bush. We discussed the position with the Government. I want you to see the influence on our judgment in the course of the developments that have gone on."

With regard to the unemployed, Mr. MacDonald, in his opening speech on policy in the House of Commons, made it quite plain that he is not going to assist them at the expense of the propertied class.

"We are not going to diminish industrial capital in order to provide relief." (*Daily Herald*, 13 Feb.) This was received with "renewed cheers."

That attitude is explained by an interview MacDonald gave to an unemployed deputation in Edinburgh, at which he is reported as saying,

"The possibility of financial panic was also a factor to be taken into account. . . . For the immediate future good administration was requisite to win the confidence of the financial groups and ensure stability." (*Worker*, 9 Feb.)

It is evident that to gain and keep the "confidence of the financial groups" rules out all measures aimed at depriving the Capitalist Class of any part of what they hold, except on terms pleasing to them.

Dr. Salter, in the *New Leader*, lays down a general principle on the wage question:

"It is quite certain that under present world circumstances and in view of the competition in outside markets, no new and higher rates of wages in any industry or in any locality should be imposed by law without careful preliminary expert investigation." (7 March, 1924.)

It would doubtless be "untimely" and "embarrassing" to suggest careful



enquiry into the need for supporting an idle class of property owners out of the product of industry.

But the question of armaments has shown up in its most glaring aspect the weakness of the Labour Government, its complete dependence on those who pull the strings, and the truth of the Socialist contention that those who accept office on such terms can be no more than caretakers of the Capitalist system. In the first place it was no accident that anti-working class imperialists like Lord Chelmsford and Brigadier-General Thompson should have gone to the Admiralty and the Air Ministry respectively. Labour members may be allowed to prattle about the Sermon on the Mount, provided they keep the fighting forces up to the level required by the international situation. Thus we have Mr. "Pacifist" Ammon at the Admiralty announcing the intention of laying down five new cruisers and two destroyers, and MacDonald actually defending it as a means of providing employment. Of the whole batch of Labour men only one, the Rev. H. Dunnico, voted against the Government; 161 voted with them, and the rest abstained. Some of the latter will perhaps follow Dunnico on the next occasion. The internal anarchy of the I.L.P. is well illustrated by their inability to control their M.P.s. A message of congratulation to Dunnico was passed unanimously by the 55 delegates attending the half-yearly conference of the Northern Counties Divisional Council of the I.L.P. It conveyed to him "Heartiest congratulations on being the only M.P. who stood loyally to the principles which our party hold."—(*Daily News*, February 27th). It was left to Liberals like Kenworthy to protest.

The Government which will not "diminish industrial capital in order to provide relief" for the unemployed has also agreed to "a big scheme of Air Defence," involving an additional expenditure of £2,500,000 for 1924-25, and with the promise that "the total of air Estimates may be expected to rise for some years."—(Lord Thompson, *Daily Herald*, March 8th.)

The *Herald* uses the word "Defence" on its front page, yet in its editorial of the same day it endorses MacDonald's view, supported by numerous "experts," that no

aircraft building can really provide any security whatever against hostile raids.

Much has been made by Labour Party apologists (e.g., *New Leader*, March 14th) of the fact that the gross expenditure on the three services is less than last year, but as Lansbury points out, this is merely due to the changing technique of warfare:

"It is said we are to spend less on armaments as a whole; it is true, because the more deadly weapons, such as bombs, gas, aeroplanes and submarines, are cheaper and yet more deadly than the obsolete Dreadnoughts and other costly weapons." (*Daily Herald*, 15 March.)

Lansbury's further reply to those who pretend to see something different in the Labour Party's attitude to armaments is equally forcible.

"But far more important is it to realise that exactly the same kind of speeches as are being made to-day from the Government benches in defence of armaments, were made during the years 1906-14 by Sir E. Grey, Lord Haldane, Mr. Winston Churchill, and Mr. Lloyd George." (*Ibid.*)

The belief, which is now the bedrock of the Labour Party's policy, that peace can be ensured by preparing for war, is not new, and it has not exactly been confirmed by history.

The truth is that competition in disposing of the surplus products of each Capitalist country in the world's markets, and rivalry in the struggle for possession of raw materials and trade routes, lead inevitably to war. The Labour Government are now busy considering schemes for reducing the cost of production in the Empire's staple export industries. In a capitalist world that means more embittered competition, and a consequently increased probability of early war with those who feel themselves being throttled in the commercial struggle. Those who have taken on the administration of Capitalism must also face the responsibility of preparing for the conflicts that are the product of Capitalism.

The true cause of modern wars was bluntly exposed by a French General, Marshall Lyauty, speaking at a banquet of the National Congress of Councillors of Foreign Trade at Marseilles in October, 1922.—(*Star*, October 31st, 1922.)

"French soldiers are fighting in Morocco to acquire territory in which rise rivers capable of supplying power for electrification schemes which will prove of great advantage to French trade. When we have acquired the last zone of cultivatable

territory, when we have nothing but mountains in front of us, we shall stop.

"Our object is commercial and economic. The military expedition in Morocco is a means, not an end. Our object is the extension of foreign trade."

Without foreign markets capitalist industry in Great Britain perishes. Without protection by dominant armaments those markets are prizes to be had for the asking. Those Labour men who believe that they can promote capitalist trade without needing to arm in order to hold what they gain, are living in a fool's paradise. They have to build cruisers and bombing planes to overawe and if need be to shatter the forces and cities of whatever States come into conflict with Great Britain.

We Socialists see that wars are unavoidable if the interests of the Capitalist Class are to be protected, but we are not concerned in protecting them. We recognise that under Capitalism the workers have nothing to lose in war except their lives and nothing to gain, and so we urge them not to support Capitalist wars or the preparation for them.

Our aim as Socialists is the destruction of the Capitalist system of society, and we are therefore unalterably hostile to all political parties which seek to gain control of Parliament for any other purpose than the establishment of Socialism. The Labour Party is such a party; it has gone into office in the custody of the Liberal Party; its so-called Socialists are puppets dancing on the strings of the industrial and financial capitalists behind the scenes; its Pacifists are merely decoys who will allay suspicion while the militarists prepare for war; its wild men are a convenient buffer to receive the blows of the workers so soon as they tire of waiting for something to be done to relieve their misery. As has been well said, the Labour Party has taken over a bankrupt concern; not, however, to wind it up, but to carry it on. As well as the troubles of previous administrations, the present Cabinet is threatened with a promising crop of revolts. The men of peace grown suddenly stiff-necked and high-handed in office will surely come into early conflict with those of their late "comrades" who were too honest to desire or too insignificant to be offered posts in the Government. The genuine disapproval of the former and the ill-concealed venom of some of the others are likely to make for

turbulence rather than tranquillity. So that even if our first Labour Government is only a Puppet Show, it should merit the distinction conceded by one observer, of being the best show in London.

H.

## JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CAPITALIST STATE.

"From the moment that we accepted and entered upon the duties of office our most important duty, our most absorbing care, has been not the party legislation, which occupies probably the largest part of our public discussion, but the development and the maintenance of that vast agriculture, manufacture, and commercial enterprise upon which the welfare and even the existence of our great population depends. . . . All the great offices of state are occupied with commercial affairs. The Foreign Office and the Colonial Office are chiefly engaged in finding new markets and in defending old ones. The War Office and the Admiralty are mostly occupied in preparations for the defence of those markets and for the protection of our commerce. The Boards of Agriculture and of Trade are entirely concerned with those two great branches of industry. Even the Education Department bases its claim to the public money upon the necessity of keeping our people well to the front in the commercial competition which they have to sustain; and the Home Office finds the largest scope for its activity in the protection of life and health and in the promotion of the comfort of the vast army of manual labourers who are engaged in those industries. Therefore it is not too much to say that commerce is the greatest of all political interests and that that Government deserves most the popular approval which does most to increase our trade and to settle it on a firm foundation."

(From a speech to the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, 1896. Quoted by L. S. Woolf in *Empire and Commerce in Africa*, p. 7.)

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**TO A NEW READER.**

You work hard when you have employment, you search hard when you have not employment. Your very existence depends upon your finding and keeping employment. Yet, in or out of employment, your daily life is hard, crammed and cramped with hard work and skimpy of enjoyment. From infancy to old age you are surrounded with poverty and the manifold miseries that are due to poverty. While you work and live amidst privation others are idle and enjoy the best the world has to offer.

Poverty is not a disease imposed by nature; it is not due to a shortage of wealth but to the way in which wealth is distributed. It is born out of particular social conditions and its existence to-day is due immediately to the way in which wealth is distributed. The way in which wealth is distributed depends upon the method of production, so that this is the fundamental cause of poverty.

To-day wealth is produced by means of privately owned means of production (land, machinery, and so on), consequently the wealth produced belongs to those who own the means of production. The workers work upon and operate the means of production but they do not own a fraction of the wealth produced.

The economic evils that exist are caused solely by the fact that the means of production belong to private individuals and not to the whole people. The *only* solution of these evils is to change the basis of society; transfer the means of production from the hands of private individuals to the whole of society—change private ownership of these things into social ownership. That is Socialism.

Perhaps you think that this solution, the Socialist solution, of your evils is too easy to be correct. Perhaps present arrangements appear to be too complicated to allow of a revolutionary change without tremendous friction.

If you will consider the matter carefully for a little while you will discover that much of the complication existing to-day is due to, and bound up with, the making of profit.

The fog surrounding international exchange; the fickleness of demand and supply; the credit system; taxation; Wages Boards; and the multitude of other things that are such perplexing problems at pre-

sent, and which in turn are given as the cause of low wages and unemployment, are all problems bound up with a system in which business is carried on for private gain. You can satisfy yourself of this fact by turning to the older systems of society that flourished during barbaric times. There you will find that the problems mentioned above did not exist. These older societies had other problems, chief of which was the lack of the means to produce wealth easily.

If the means of production and distribution are owned in common by the whole of society and used to meet the needs of the whole of society the necessary measures to be taken to secure the requisite production and distribution would be comparatively simple.

Let us assume for a few moments that the majority of society have considered that Socialism is desirable and have elected delegates to Parliament to make the change. What would be the steps to be taken once these delegates had obtained control? We will emulate the prophets and indulge in a little idle surmise, on the assumption that general conditions will be as at present on the morrow of the revolution.

First of all three main lines of investigation would have to be followed. It would be necessary to—

1. Ascertain the needs of the population.
2. The means available to satisfy these needs.
3. The labour required to do the necessary work.

Let us take these three items in turn and examine them.

1. It would be necessary to divide the country up into areas according to the distribution of the population, and to find out the kind and amount of goods required for different areas. The skeleton of such an organisation already exists to-day in the form of Urban, Rural and County Councils. It would only be a question of compiling different kinds of statistics from those which are compiled to-day. The main things we require are food, clothing, and habitations.

2. The means available to satisfy the above needs would include land, raw material, machinery, and transportation facilities—roads, canals, railways, sea routes, air routes. Again a question of compiling statistics.

3. It would be necessary to find out the number of workers, the various kinds of skill, and the distribution of the workers over the country.

In the above three directions it would be a matter of compiling statistics. The vast amount of statistical work that is done at present and its nature show that the organisation for doing such work is already in existence and would be available.

Once having compiled and collected the statistics (a relatively simple matter) it would be necessary to distribute the work according to workers and resources, and spread the work approximately equally over all so that more work would not be demanded from one than from another.

It may be urged that England is not a self-supporting country and that once dealings are entered into with people abroad complications would arise. Here it must be borne in mind that all over the world the degree of advancement in the important countries (those that would really matter) is roughly about the same. By the time the majority of the people in this country had arrived at the idea that Socialism was desirable, the people in other countries would be near, if they had not actually reached, the same view. So that a fundamental social change in England would rapidly develop a corresponding change abroad and ease the necessary international dealings. While each country must settle its own social problem, yet each cannot do so without involving the world in its operations. Hence the international character of Socialism.

At the moment of writing a matter is occupying considerable attention in the newspapers that may provide us with an illustration of the complexity of affairs at present.

Within a few days two wild fluctuations occurred in the ratio of English money to French money. The French franc was quoted at 2½d. not long ago, then it suddenly went down to 2d., and at the moment of writing it has suddenly risen to 2½d. once more. These fluctuations, we are assured, are extremely dangerous to business. The production of goods, and buying and selling, are interfered with, and the existence of empires is imperilled. So we are informed by the newspapers. Now surely this is curious and perplexing. Raw materials exist in abundance, workers are

walking the streets for lack of employment, yet we are pinched for want of the necessities of life, and the reason given is that certain purely financial operations are clogging the wheels of production.

The point to be borne in mind is that financial operations are built up on the production and distribution of wealth, and that without such production and distribution there would be no financial operations. On the other hand production and distribution of wealth can exist, and has existed, without financial operations.

When the workers of the world take control of the production and distribution of wealth on their own behalf there will be no room for the financier and the latter's operations will no longer interfere with the production of the things necessary to life. Born out of profit-making he, and all his tricks and entanglements, will go out with the going out of the profit-making system.

GILMAC.

**Our TWENTIETH ANNUAL CONFERENCE** will be held on April 18th and 19th, 1924, at Fairfax Hall, Stanhope Gardens, Harringay, London, N. The proceedings are open to the public, and commence at 10 a.m. on both days.

A Re-Union of members and friends will be held on the first evening (Good Friday). Tickets 1/-. Doors open 7 p.m. Commences 7.30 p.m. Come along!

## A PUBLIC MEETING

will be held at

**STRATFORD TOWN HALL,**

on Sunday, April 27th, 1924.

Doors Open 7 p.m.

Commence 7.30 p.m.

SPEAKER—A. KOHN.

Subject: "Why Socialists must be Revolutionary."

ADMISSION FREE. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

APRIL,



1924

**THE WESTMINSTER BY-ELECTION.**

From the National point of view the by-election for the Westminster Abbey Division presents no particular point beyond the spectacle of four supporters of capitalism competing for one seat.

From the local point of view it afforded some amusement, while certain features are worth noting.

The outstanding feature was the large poll given to the Labour candidate, Mr. Fenner Brockway. The Labour Party are jubilant at their second attack upon what has always been looked upon as a Tory stronghold since John Stuart Mill sat for the division.

Mr. Scott Duckers, the Liberal candidate, claims to have kept Mr. Churchill out, because those who voted for Mr. Scott Duckers would otherwise have voted for Mr. Churchill. There is very little evidence, however, for this statement, and it is far more likely that had Mr. Scott Duckers not run the bulk of the votes he received would have gone to the Labour candidate, who, like Mr. Scott Duckers, was a conscientious objector during the war.

It was interesting to see one objector opposing the "Five Cruisers" scheme, while the other one supported the scheme. It shows how poor a base sentiment is for a political policy.

The Tory Party split over the candidates put forward and the official machine realised it had a formidable task in front of it. Not only was there the great wealth of Mr. Churchill's family behind him, but the yellow gutter press and the *Observer* were using all their influence to support Mr. Churchill. Added to this was Mr. Churchill's record and the fact that he is a master of platform clap-trap. In fact, the only thing he appeared to lack was a sense of decency.

Mr. Churchill conducted his campaign as a "Show" or piece of buffoonery. Fighting men, jockeys, comedians, etc., were his principal speakers. Processions of highly decorated motor-cars toured the streets, and the candidate joined in the procession at times. This gutter method of conducting a campaign shows the shallow mind of the individual responsible for such method.

But a later incident looks rather curious. During the closing days of the campaign, the newspapers reported that a motor-car, carrying the Labour Party placard, persistently followed Mr. Churchill's car, and whenever he attempted to speak drowned his voice with motor horns, rattles and shouting.

This incident must have swung some hundreds of votes to Mr. Churchill, as the "waverers" in both Liberal and Tory camps would vote for him under these conditions, because "he was not getting fair play." The Labour Party stated that the car was not officially connected with them, despite its labels, and among so many blatant "stunts" in operation, the suspicion arises that the hooligan car was run by Mr. Churchill or his supporters on purpose to gain the sympathy of those mentioned above.

Now hooliganism, long a favourite method with the Tories, whether indulged in from a motor-car or the kerbstone, is both reactionary and cowardly. It is an admission that the hooligan cannot meet the arguments of his opponents and so indulges in methods to prevent him being heard. Such tactics are to be condemned, no matter who indulges in them.

One other fact emerged from this by-election. Practically all the capitalist press united in talking of "Mr. Churchill's brilliance," "his great gifts," "his remarkable abilities," etc., but when one reads the carefully prepared speeches he gave, they

turned out to contain nothing but stale and worn-out platitudes.

Any members of the working class, who were led away by this praise of the press, will now be able to realise that Churchill is only a shallow-pated chameleon. J. F.

**WOOL-PULLING.**

This game has nothing in common with leg-pulling. Authorities differ as to which is the older, and there is a marked difference of opinion as to their exact origin, but that need not concern us. Baudelaire attributed laughter to the satanic influence in man, and as leg-pulling is usually aimed at promoting laughter, this game seems possessed of a very antique parentage. On the other hand, wool-pulling was not known by that name until the invention of the American language. Was it not to one of the American Presidents who attended the post-war conferences, that the advice was tendered, "Don't let 'em pull the wool over your eyes?" Whether they did or not is beside the point. Suffice it that the Americans have invented a phrase much more living and vivid than our own terse "spoof" or "codology," neither of which are dictionary words.

But without spending any more time in profitless research, let us direct our gaze to Bradford, where the wool comes from. This is not necessarily the wool that is used in obstructing the vision, but as you will presently perceive, the Bradfordians are not unacquainted with the practice. Doubtless, inspired by those disinterested, high souled patriots who advise us by poster to "drink more milk," to "eat more fruit," to "own your house" and what not, they hired a large space in the *Daily News*, on February 21st, in which to tell us to insist on buying Bradford products. "Everyone can help," they said in heavy leaded type, "to reduce unemployment. If the purchase of a foreign-made article causes unemployment in Great Britain, then to the price paid for that foreign article must be added the cost of maintaining the resulting unemployment."

There is much more, of course, in the advertisement. British prosperity, British interests, national safety, relief of taxation, full production, and all the usual tags of the wool-puller are utilised. We are assured that "the greater the demand by the home

trade, the greater is the opportunity for successful competition in foreign markets."

Simple, isn't it! You buy British goods only and thus bankrupt the foreigner. Having reduced him to a beggar, "the greater is the opportunity for successful competition in foreign markets." Then, obviously, the home unemployed should be an ideal market for the home manufacturer. Of course, there is more in the argument than this. The British worker, like any other worker, buys what his wages permit him to buy. As his wages are determined by the cost of living, he can do no other. In point of fact, he does precisely what the Bradford manufacturers do. The best answer to their case is contained in the same issue of the *Daily News*. And it concerns Bradford itself.

"A decision of the Bradford Corporation Electricity Committee to accept the tender of a Belgian firm for the supply of four machines, has aroused some feeling. The Belgian firm's tender was for £13,000, whereas the lowest British tender was £17,000. The Committee held that the desire to relieve unemployment did not justify paying the additional £4,000."

Comment would spoil it. We confine ourselves to the simple statement, that it is not what you spend, or how you spend it, that should be your chief concern. It is what you *get* that matters. It is in the workshop that you are robbed. Your efforts should be concentrated in obtaining, along with your fellow workers, ownership and control of your means of livelihood. Compared with this, how you spend your pittance is a secondary matter, and a bad second at that. Own your means of living; all else is "wool-pulling." Don't let 'em pull the wool over your eyes.

W. T. H.

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FROM THE  
S.P.G.B., 17 Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1



## CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Comrade,

1. J. F. nowhere convinces me that a sovereign is not a commodity. He could settle the polemic at once by giving us the laws whereby we distinguish commodity wealth from capitalist wealth, and from wealth in general. You will see how important my point is when I say if we understand the laws we will be able to put all use-values in their different categories, and will be able to say, without further aid, whether a sovereign is, or is not, a commodity. I say *laws* deliberately; for to find the common factors that commodities possess, or obtain in their relation with other commodities, would only give us the law of commodities, but could not possibly give us the law whereby we distinguish the forms which wealth takes up under Capitalist production. How well Marx knew this is seen in "Capital," where he takes 122 pages to explain commodity wealth. He only starts to explain Capitalist production on page 123. I again assert that it is J. F.'s duty, as teacher, to *give us the law*. I make no apologies for using the term as it is the correct one. I am fully aware that J. F. says he has already given a "definition;" but I point out that it is inadequate, and lacking, because we cannot classify by its aid.

2. I have not, and do not agree with J. F. when he says that I "failed to understand the difference between a sovereign and a mere piece of gold." I will endeavour to make my position clear to him. Gold is the universal equivalent (U.E.) which, if it is to exist at all, take up some form, or forms it must, or if you will, the U.E. exists in and through its forms. The forms are different in different countries, and it takes up the form of bullion internationally. The forms of the U.E. can, and do, change, e.g., when we make sovereigns into bullion, or when a state strikes a new gold coin. Now, my point is, whatever forms the U.E. takes up, and however much they may change, *their universal nature remains the same, i.e., they are still money*. The sovereign being a part of the U.E. functions as the *general equivalent* in Britain, and the dollar does the same in the United States, and bullion acts in the same capacity internationally. The difference between the U.E. and the general equivalent, is the

difference between the general and the special. Seeing then, that the "commodity par excellence" can only exist in and through its forms, then it is apodictically certain that a sovereign is a commodity, if Marx is correct. But that is merely taking Marx's word for it, which is dangerous, for the reader has still a perfect right to ask, "What gives us our concept of a commodity?" That is where J. F. comes in, as teacher. If he still disagrees that the U.E. takes up the form of the sovereign in Britain, will he tell us what form it does take up, for it is certain that no person in Britain tenders a "mere piece of gold" in exchange for commodities.

3. I assert then that the U.E. in each country takes up the form of gold coins, whose weight and quality is guaranteed by the different states. But that fact does not hinder Marx from illustrating in "D. The Money Form" that other commodities reflect their value, in certain definite ratios, in a specific quantity of gold. Further, it *does not mean* that a particle of weight enters into value. What it does mean is, that in a specific quantity of gold there is a certain amount of a common something which all other commodities possess, and because of that the gold is able to reflect their value. That clears up the first point that J. F. tries to make against me by the use of form D.

4. It is one thing to quote Marx, it is another thing to understand him. J. F. also gives form D. in order to try and convince the readers of *The Socialist Standard* that gold is "exchanged by weight." A little investigation of the items therein will convince the readers, that have studied Marx, that it proves the opposite. For example, we note that 10lb. of tea, or 40lb. of coffee, or  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton of iron is equal to 2 ounces of gold. Now it is crystal clear that no two of the items are equal in weight; *ergo* it cannot possibly be gravity that makes them exchange in definite ratios; and even the standard of weight, used to weigh gold, is different than the one used to weigh the ordinary commodities. And what about the poor coat and 20 yards of linen that are not exchanged by weight? Might I point out to J. F. that he has made a slight error by mistaking the "standard of price" for "the measure of value," a thing that might happen to any beginner. I trust that J. F. will not try to hold such

an untenable position, after the error has been pointed out to him, or the C.L.C. will have a new cult in political economy to contend with, namely, "The Gravity School," with J. F. as its Pope.

5. I don't deny that "capital has not invented surplus-labour." What I do assert is, that it is the cause of surplus-value. A very different thing. The problem why the slave could not produce S.V. could not arise until S.V. existed. For its existence it had to wait the advent of the free labourer, as Marx says. It is a long story that could not be fully worked out here. J. F. is so little acquainted with the dialectic method that he cannot distinguish a thing's nature from its forms; fails to distinguish between gravity and abstract labour; mistakes surplus-labour for surplus-value; and up to now, cannot even put a sovereign in its correct category. There is certainly room for improvement.

Yours fraternally,

WM. WALKER.

## ANSWER TO W. W.

The above letter shows that "W. W." had run through his little stock of clumsy phrases, shuffles and evasions, in his communication published in the November issue of the *Socialist Standard*.

So he begins all over again like a badly cracked and chipped gramophone record that has reached the end of its particular impressions and is set off again after the spring has been rewound.

The whole of the statements in the above letter have been dealt with in our previous replies. For ease of reference we have numbered "W. W.'s" paragraphs.

No. 1 completely demolished in S.S. for November, 1923.

No. 2 fully dealt with in S.S. for May, 1923.

No. 3 "W. W.'s" confusion thoroughly exposed in S.S. for September, 1923.

No. 4 "W. W.'s" ignorance of Marx fully explained in S.S. for November, 1923.

No. 5, the ignorance of "W. W." on simple history, fully exposed in S.S. for November, 1923.

The first run of the record was painful—very. The second is worse and in compassion for our readers we cannot allow any further repetitions of its harsh and contradictory tones.

J. F.

Sir,—I note with interest your Election Manifesto of current issue. My attention has been arrested more particularly with regard to that part which runs as follows (page 51, column 24, S.S.:—"As a sufficient number of the working class is not yet desirous of establishing Socialism to permit of any candidates being put forward at this election." "Here you offer advice." It is specifically the paragraph marked with \* that I wish to deal with. That statement I accept as definite, and upon analysing same deduct the following: (a) Sufficient number, a portion definitely held in mind by the S.P.G.B. organisation. (b) You would fall into line with other political expressions, i.e., L.P., C.P., or I.L.P., and adopt Parliamentary candidates. (c) The possibility of witnessing a nominee of the party contesting a bye-election. (d) A Socialist in the "House" with his or her hands tied to their back. I do not think I can be accused of misrepresenting your statement. There certainly is a significant deviation from Marxian philosophy, and it is hoped that it is not wilful. If you hold that the putting into operation of your objects (and mine) depends on a sufficient number of Socialists acquiring the useful Parliamentary machine, *whether or no*, democracy demands and desires that change of society, you will, as the principled men that I know you to be, stand by that conviction at the next election. This, although constituting a compromise and place your party on par with C.P., would in itself be inconsistent with your general principles. I trust this letter will be published in your next issue, and that the anticipated reply will be given in accordance with true camaraderie.

I am, fraternally,

P. J. LOCKWOOD, U.P.W., E.C.D.O.

A Wage Slave.

## REPLY TO LOCKWOOD.

Mr. Lockwood asks that our reply shall be given in accordance with true camaraderie. What a pity he did not write his letter in that same accord instead of trying to hide deliberate misrepresentation under the guise of "deductions."

The paragraph Mr. Lockwood refers to is as follows:—



"As a sufficient number of the working class is not yet desirous of establishing Socialism to permit of any candidate being put forward at this election, we call upon all those who wish for Socialism to express their wish by going to the ballot-box and voting for SOCIALISM by writing it across the ballot paper."

Instead of dealing with this paragraph as it is written, Mr. Lockwood prefers to draw what he calls "deductions."

Let us examine some of these.

(b) Either Mr. Lockwood has read our literature and heard our speakers, or he has not. If the former is true then his "deduction" is a deliberate misrepresentation, because, as all our writings and speeches show, we are directly opposed to, and have fought on every occasion, the methods of the parties to whom he refers. First, and above all, these organisations are anti-Socialist and run their candidates on anti-Socialist programmes. Secondly, as a result, they engage in underhand trickery, open and secret bargaining for votes, and indulge in various intrigues to obtain money from Trade Unions and other organisations.

If Mr. Lockwood has not read our writings, or heard our speakers, then his impertinence in classing us with anti-Socialist organisations is great. Neither he, nor any one else has any right to criticise a person or an organisation of whom they are in complete ignorance, still less to attribute to them the very things they oppose.

(d) This "deduction" sounds curious. Why should a Socialist have his hands tied behind him (or her) any more than any other individual member? If Mr. Lockwood means that a Socialist Member of Parliament could not pass a resolution, or a Bill, by himself, this almost childish truth is equally true of any other individual member, whether he belongs to any party or whether he does not. But why stop at an individual member? The same is equally true of a minority. The Labour Party at the present moment can only do those things that suit the other parties in the House of Commons. As soon as it attempts to interfere seriously with any interest of the Capitalist class, it will be thrown out of office by the majority in the House. All this has been pointed out scores of times in the *Socialist Standard*.

Mr. Lockwood says "there certainly is a significant deviation from Marxian philosophy, and it is hoped that it is not wilful."

Where is this deviation?

Mr. Lockwood does not tell us, *because it only exists in his misrepresentation of our case*, and cannot be found anywhere in the Manifesto he is supposed to be criticising.

Mr. Lockwood's next statement is a contradiction in terms. Having apparently filled his head with Communist rant about a minority seizing power, he is unable to see the facts of the situation.

"A sufficient number of Socialists" could, obviously, be nothing less than a working majority above all other parties combined. This majority can only exist when a majority of the Electorate desire to establish Socialism, and show their desire by voting for Socialist candidates. But what is the "democracy" Mr. Lockwood has in mind? He does not tell us. Unless he has some fantasy of his own on the matter, "democracy" means the mass, or majority, of a people in a given society. Hence the return of a majority of Socialists to the House of Commons is impossible until a majority of the working class (we prefer this clear unequivocal term) or the "democracy" as Mr. Lockwood prefers, had become Socialists.

Where is the "compromise"? So far being on a par with the Communist Party, as shown above, our Marxian position is in direct opposition to that freak and fake organisation

ED. COM.

That is a property which cannot be Disjoined from a thing and separate Without the said thing's death. Fluidity Is thus a property of water; weight Is of a stone. Whilst riches, poverty, Slavery, freedom, concord, war, and hate, Which change, and not inhere in things of sense,

We name not properties, but accidents.

Lucretius.

### NEW YORK.

Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD interested in Socialist Educational Work may communicate with

Socialist Educational Society  
of New York,

127 University Place New York City.

### IDEALS AND REALITIES.

No doubt the upholders of this best of all worlds—the present Capitalist system—would like everything to appear coloured in the satisfaction of their own being. From the Duke of Northumberland to Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, all are intensely satisfied, because they want for nothing. A rosy world it is for them, coloured in the light of their own satisfied needs. What matter that hunger and poverty stalk abroad unhampered among the working class; the class that produces the necessities, as well as the luxuries of life upon which these people fatten. "Be reconciled to the present state of things," they say to the working class "for fear worse things befall you." Look at Russia," and they hold their breath at this spectre, not long enough, unfortunately, to cause internal disruption.

"How silly to strike for better conditions, look at the loss in terms of pounds, and the harm you do to the community by so doing," they inform the workers. How quickly these people can change their names.

Societies for the reconciliation of capitalists and workers have sprung up like mushrooms and have as quickly disappeared.

The attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable are more than they or their arch priest, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, with all his astuteness, can manage.

They may turn aside for the moment the efforts of the workers to raise their standard of life; an effort which can only be attained at first at the expense of the Capitalist class, but with irresistible force the dam of platitudes is broken down under the pressure of economic forces. The inherent contradictions in the present social system are such as to play havoc with all absolute ideals.

On the one hand the Capitalist desires as much profit as possible. To obtain this he must pay as little as possible for the worker's commodity, "labour power." It is always the Capitalist's desire to keep the price of labour power at a minimum, compatible with its efficiency. On the other hand the worker desires to obtain as high a price as possible for his commodity, labour power. The result is an antagonism between the two, which is impossible in the

present social system to prevent. The workers in Trade and Industrial Unions are so organised because they realise that by this method they can more effectively struggle for a better price for their labour power, which price they obtain in the form of wages.

In spite of the nebulous sitting on the fence attitude of many Trade Union officials they are forced to act in this struggle, for otherwise the workers would repudiate them.

During the last few months this conflict of interests has been shown by the Railmen and the Dockers, and now the Miners are proving the truth that this class antagonism cannot be prevented under this system.

The platitudes of Reconciliation, Pacifism, No More War, etc., are like feathers blown about in a gale.

Not long ago we had the spectacle of professed pacifist Members of Parliament, including J. H. Hudson and A. W. Haycock, Parliamentary Members for Huddersfield and West Salford respectively, both of whom had served long terms of imprisonment during the war in their stand against militarism, voting credits for fine cruisers, while jingo liberal M.P.'s voted against the bill.

Thus we get the difference between pacifist platitudes and practice. War, and therefore the means for waging war, are almost inevitable in a system in which countries like Great Britain, America, France, Japan, etc., producing an enormous surplus of commodities, and desiring markets for these commodities, get in each other's way in that desire. The main cause of the last war lies in this fact.

Very few now deny that the competition for markets between Germany and Great Britain was a big factor in bringing about the last war. The camouflage phrases of the "Rights of Small Nations," the crushing of Prussian Militarism," were but the poison gas behind which the real cause was concealed.

The working class by applying their energy to Nature's materials produce all wealth, yet they do not own it. A small non-producing class owns the greater portion.

In the Manifesto of the S.P.G.B., page 22, a calculation of the wealth produced in this country from a Capitalist



source gave the workers share of this wealth in Great Britain as one-third. On page 23 a computation by Carol D. Wright, one-time Commissioner of Labour to the U.S.A. Government, gave the workers' share in U.S.A. as an eighth of his product. What does the Capitalist Class do with the remaining portion?

However lavishly it expands this superfluity it is impossible for this class to rid itself of all this abundance very quickly by ordinary channels. Markets must be found to realise the profit on the goods produced. Otherwise these goods lie in the warehouses and become a burden instead of an asset. The fact that people need these goods does not form an effective demand. Workers may go about without boots, clothing, and starve, while the warehouses and shops will be overflowing with these essentials of life. This, simply because the worker has not the wherewithal to purchase them. The more overstocked with goods the warehouses are the greater generally is the misery and poverty of the working class. Such is the paradox of this social system. War is one method of finding an effective market for these goods. There was no unemployed during the war, when commodities produced were quickly destroyed. If only the Capitalist Class could find such an effective method now of ridding themselves of their superfluous goods, what a happy world it would be for them. Unfortunately for them war does not last for ever.

So we have a million and a-half unemployed workers living from hand to mouth in the hope that their labour power may be required some time or other when the good god or some other divinity of chance helps the Capitalist Class to rid itself of this superfluous wealth which the workers have produced to their own detriment.

If the working class would only realise that there is no way out of this rut in the present system. If pacifists and other sentimentalists would realise that the cause of war, unemployment, poverty, lies in the Capitalist system, and that the only way to deal effectively with these problems is to abolish this system of the private ownership of the means of production and establish Socialism; if instead of plaintively attacking the evil results of this system by means of shallow platitudes which, on coming up against reality, they find necessary to throw

overboard; if, in short, they would attack the root instead of the branches, then, and then only, would they have some hope of realising a new and better world. H. A.

### BY THE WAY.

"But you ask why the Socialists, who are supposed to be the champions of the working classes, and endeavouring to obtain them employment, should be against emigration. It is because they think that the working classes are their supporters, and with a steady emigration of them the Socialists would look askance at their dwindling forces." (Democrat, 15/3/24.)

You do your own supposing, answer your own question, then dispose of the Socialists—easily! This method also allows for the introduction of several working classes; we, however, have never been able to discover more than one, a class who have the complete monopoly of employment, a monopoly their masters, the Capitalist class, are not likely to deny them. At present the majority of the workers support Capitalism, not Socialism, because they fail to understand with what ease the world's resources could be made to promote abundance and leisure for all, if commonly owned and used for that purpose. Without such understanding they imagine they are born for work alone, they live for it, emigrate for it, and often die from an overdose of it, not knowing that they give up their lives for no other purpose than sustaining a set of parasites in all the ease and comfort that could be theirs—aye! and many times better, if they wished it—if they would scrap their cardboard Capitalist heroes and realise their own importance.

\* \* \*

"Mr. Wm. Leach, Under-Secretary for Air, in a clever speech, showed how slices of Socialism saved the country in the war period and abolished unemployment." (Report, Daily Herald, 17/3/24.)

Unfortunately, lacking the vivid imagination of our brainy labourite, we mistook the above "slices of Socialism" for very thick slices of Capitalism. And having some recollection of the "war period," ungrateful wretches that we are, we feel unable to appreciate or anticipate a recurrence of such methods of abolishing unemployment. The above quotation is taken from what the *Daily Herald* considers a "clever speech." Opinions differ, however; from the standpoint of truth and intelligence it would be unworthy of a village idiot.

\* \* \*

"Against that which was really Socialistic the soul of England would swiftly rise in revolt, for God had meant us to be a free and not an enslaved people. . . . What was wanted was a truly humane campaign of courage and wisdom, conducted by all the men and women of goodwill in our land, who had not bowed the knee to this alien conception called Socialism." (Prebendary Gough, *New Voice*, Feb.)

Of course, it is nice to know from an authoritative (!) source all about the future movements of the "Soul of England" (whatever it may be) and likewise God's views on slavery. For our part the above timid twaddle merely offers evidence that there are still many in the twentieth century whose mentality is largely made up of slightly modified primitive superstition and ignorance, an ignorance the medicine men of the Capitalists seek to perpetuate for their masters' sake. According to the press who term a "Labour" Party with a Capitalist programme a "Socialist" Party, and the prophetic vision of the above reverent gentleman, we may now anticipate the revolt of the "Soul of England" and the opposition of Anti-Socialists with "courage and wisdom." From past experience, the latter will at least be a welcome change.

MAC.

### SOCIALIST TACTICS.

People are frequently met with who assure us that though they agree with our principles they regard our tactics as "too theoretical"! Apparently, in their minds, tactics are something to be guided or determined, not by the theories or principles, but exclusively by outside "conditions," though our opponents are seldom clear as to what they mean by "conditions."

They will admit that present-day society involves the enslavement of the working-class and, consequently, a struggle between that class and its masters; they will accept the statement that the workers must free themselves by converting the means of life into common property and that they must seize political power for that purpose; yet, they will boggle at the last jump and decline to admit that we are right in opposing all other political parties.

The particular brand of opponent to whom I refer usually calls himself a "Communist" nowadays. Not many years ago the term "British Socialist" or "Socialist Labour" man was good enough for him

and previous to that "Social Democrat" was fashionable.

The so-called Revolution in Russia, however, induced him to change his name again without altering to any appreciable extent his mental outlook. He still continued to attach more importance to names than to things, and was more concerned with advocating Soviets than Socialism. Indeed, he habitually expresses profound scepticism regarding the possibility of interesting the workers in the latter proposition. He does not consider them capable of rising to his own lofty intellectual level; nor does he hesitate to deride those of us who have greater trust in our class.

The alleged "Communist" believes in his ability to capture the Labour Party and "lead" it. So he alternately condemns that Party's present "leaders" and supports them at election times.

He endeavours to justify this attitude by referring to a phrase in the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, to wit:—"The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties." In this he shows his lack of logic and historical knowledge.

In the first place the present-day "Communists" do form a separate party and the alleged "Labour" Party has opposed their admission into its ranks. Secondly, the phrase quoted above is, in its practical application, "antiquated, because," in Engels' own words, "the political situation has been entirely changed and the progress of history has swept from off the earth" the working-class parties referred to. (See Engels' preface, "Communist Manifesto," Reeves Edition, 1888.)

What was the political situation at the time Marx and Engels penned their historical document? Briefly, the open political arena was confined to the representatives of the various sections of the master-class. The workers were not enfranchised and were reduced to a fight for political elbow room. Under such conditions it was practically impossible for the Communists to form an independent political party.

They stood for the conquest of political power by the workers as the means of achieving the social revolution, but the technical means of this conquest, i.e., the franchise, had yet to be acquired. Hence the Communists supported, in England, the Chartists and similar bodies on the Con-



minent. This in itself is a significant fact which the workers would do well to bear in mind when latter-day "Communists" pretend to ridicule the franchise as a political weapon, what time they are not urging the workers to use it to put in office the traitors of the Labour Party.

Conditions broke up the Chartist Movement, but the ruling class could not stop the advance of industry and the increase of the working-class. Neither could they dispense with the assistance of their slaves in the political field. Hence in the long run they were compelled to furnish the workers with the very political weapon which will serve as the instrument of emancipation. The masters enfranchised their slaves not because they loved them but because they could no longer hold back the wheel of development.

Since that day the modern Socialist tactics have been both a possibility and a necessity. Nothing now prevents a revolutionary party openly proclaiming its objective and calling upon the workers to organise for its establishment. While, on the other hand, every political party seeks the support of the workers only one party can represent their interests. That party is the Socialist Party. No other party can use the political machinery except as an instrument of oppression. Parties which stand for Capitalism in any shape or form, no matter what superficial changes they propose, can only maintain the system by force against the workers.

The Socialist Party, standing as it does for a social revolution, can only achieve its object by means of a political revolution.

The legislative and administrative powers must be torn from the hands of the agents of the master-class by the working-class consciously organised in a political party for the purpose. Only then can the means of life become the property of all.

If the foregoing outline is correct (and we challenge our opponents to point out an error) the Socialist Party has no alternative but to oppose all other parties. There can be no compromise between the robbers and the robbed, the rulers and the oppressed.

Hence we carry on our work of Socialist propaganda, confident that with further economic development our task will become easier, that the workers will see the light and organise for Socialism. E. B.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

### OBJECT.

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

## Declaration of Principles.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

#### HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No 237. Vol. 20.]

LONDON, MAY, 1924.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK SUBURBIA.

On April 1st the strike of tramwaymen came to an end. London heaved a sigh of relief, and returned with gladness to the daily dodging of sudden death, when her 'buses and trams were restored to her. Rather congestion than absolute famine seemed the general feeling, and the average citizen turned to the morning paper to learn what he was required to think about it all. All the following extracts are from leading articles of the periodicals named, on April 1st. Thus the *Daily News* :—

No attempt is now made to blink the fact that the railway, dock and tram strikes are the fore-runners of a succession of critical wage disputes with which the present year is threatened. They are an inevitable sequel to the fierce and successful attacks which were made on wages when industry was in the lowest depths of depression. The same reactions follow each other in recurring cycles, with the same disastrous injury to the trade of the country. The popular suggestion at the moment is for "an exhaustive scientific inquiry" into the question of wages in all industries, and particularly into the relation between the wages of skilled and unskilled workers. Such an inquiry might have valuable results if it were accompanied by an inquiry also into the question of profits. But a scientific solution cannot of itself avail much. The course of industry will continue to be disturbed by these volcanic eruptions until employers and employed revolutionise their attitude to each other and agree to submit their differences as a matter of course, when they occur, to the judgment of a competent and impartial tribunal. From that ideal we are unhappily still very far distant.

Note the gloom in the last sentence. Perhaps they secretly realise that an "impartial" tribunal under Capitalism is about as likely as a "fair trial" in a political case.

The *Daily Express*, usually the vehicle of hollow skulled hysteria, was singularly mild. It confined itself to commenting upon the good-tempered manner in which the dispute had been conducted, and hoped "Mr. MacDonald's Government" (*lése majesté*!) "will now lose no time in pushing through the Traffic Bill." Advocacy from such a quarter is sufficient in itself to damn anything. One sentence from their leading article is worth embalming :—"Ten days have been lost, to say nothing of the enormous sums that have been wasted in this futile strike." So that a strike that results in 17,000 men getting a rise of either 4s. or 6s. per week is futile! What will they call it when, in the next industrial depression, the masters knock it off again?

The *Daily Mail*—well, you know what the *Mail* would say, don't you! Not that it was futile. Oh! no. "Mr. MacDonald has by his feebleness presented Mr. Bevin with a great success . . . ." The *Mail* has a tiresome, senile habit of referring to movements in terms of prominent individuals. In the present instance it obscures the fact that Bevin took the lead because the men compelled him. Curiously enough the "great success" was given the heading "A Bad Settlement" and follows:—

Mr. Bevin, by the merciless use of force, has obtained an immediate increase in wages of 6s. a week for skilled and 4s. for unskilled employees, though it was admitted that the industry cannot afford such a wage rate. The settlement is therefore a bad one in itself. It has a further grave disadvantage of offering direct encouragement to the methods which Mr. Bevin has employed in demanding money whether it is there or not.



It is said that immediately prior to the strike Lord Rothermere was travelling by his usual tram, when the conductor had the temerity to ask him for his fare. His proffered twopence was refused until by a merciless use of force he was compelled to pay threepence, although it was admitted he could not afford it. The conductor admitted that his employers expected him to demand the money whether it was there or not. It is a sad world.

Further search through the leading article mentioned reveals another relatively lucid interval. Remember the *Daily Mail* is a Tory paper:—

The Government's duty was to recognise that a transport strike differs fundamentally from other industrial disputes. A transport strike is not like an ordinary strike, because it aims its blows at the whole body politic and because it attacks the public rather than any body of employers. It is a political movement, not an economic struggle, and it ought to be dealt with accordingly by the authority which represents the public and the nation.

We seem to recall the same criticism in connection with a coal strike, a dock strike, and any strike that is big enough to give Capital a severe jolt, and then whilst that is still fresh, read the *Manchester Guardian's* leader, particularly the following extract, remembering that the *Guardian* is a Liberal paper:—

The men had a legitimate object, but the method is one which no community will tolerate for long. Traffic strikes are not industrial disputes between employers and employed, but attacks upon the public, and especially on the working-class public, who are forced to travel to their work and have not the means to command private conveyances. There ought to be full and proper machinery for the just settlement of all working conditions, but the method of securing justice by holding up the public ought to be ruled out. It can only be described as the tyrannical exercise of monopoly power, and if persisted in it will meet the fate of all monopolies. Step by step the public will organise itself against such emergencies. Struggles might ensue of a kind which we do not care to contemplate, and eventually the public would win.

Notice the great gulf that yawns between Tory and Liberal! The article is singular in that it incorporates a very fair statement of the ordinary workers side of the case:—

On the one side, let us do justice to the men and their leaders. The men had a case, and the Court of Inquiry pronounced it a good case. To underpaid workpeople when they complain, it is not an adequate reply to urge the necessity of their work in the public service. Their very natural rejoinder is that, while it is very gratifying to find themselves so much needed, the more the

reason for recognising their necessities as well. If work is particularly useful, why not pay the workers enough? If some departments of it are not earning the wherewithal to pay so much, that, in the view of the worker, is a reason for reorganisation, conceivably in extreme cases for the closing down of unprofitable services—services which by the test of figures the public do not, after all, need to the extent of being willing to pay for them adequately. In short, the worker makes a fair remuneration the test of public as of private industrial service. For this he cannot be blamed as long as his views of "fair" remuneration are reasonable, as in this case they have been held to be.

Then lower down, follows the piece first quoted, where the *Manchester Guardian* prophesies that the "public" will win. You are naturally curious as to who the "public" really is. The *Guardian* anticipates this question:—

When we say the public, we do not mean, as is so often meant, the middle classes. We mean all the people except the particular section of the workers interested.

This is refreshing candour, to say the least of it. One might hastily assume that the best course of action before the workers would be for them all to go on strike together, when, of course, the "public" would have ceased to exist. If the "public" is this shifting entity; if, for instance, when the Lots Road electricians go on strike, the tube railwaymen are part of the public, and when *vice-versa*, a strike on the Tubes makes the electricians part of the public, how is the public going to "step by step . . . organise itself against such emergencies?" It is somewhat bewildering.

But the *Manchester Guardian* has a remedy:—

What will have to come in the public services is something on the analogy of a Wages Board, in which the workers will themselves take a responsible part, and which will be instructed to have regard not merely to paying capacity, but to movements in the cost of living and to rates prevailing in other occupations comparable in respect of the skill and the efforts demanded of the worker. What has gone awry in our industrial system since the war is the disturbance of the balance between one occupation and another. Where the workers have a pull on the public they have maintained the relatively high standards to which the war brought them. Where they have had no such pull they have fallen, and we have the spectacle of skilled engineers, the very pride of English industry, working for less than unskilled labourers. If we ask for the workers respect for order we must show them our respect for justice.

This is a tremendous advance. This, surely, is the first rosy flush of the dawn of Utopia—Liberty variety. Wages in future

are to be determined not merely by "paying capacity," but also by the cost of living, and by what "the others" are getting. Now, of course, as is well known, wages are determined by the state of the tides, the average rainfall, and the height of Ben Nevis:—

What has gone wrong with our industrial system, since the war is the disturbance of the balance between one occupation and another?

Oh! that war. What a happy, happy world did it terminate. "Before the war," has become a phrase signifying bliss unimaginable. Who does not remember that golden period before August, 1914. No unemployed; high wages; short hours; cheap food; everyone lived in his own house; sickness unknown and no one ever died. Even the weather was better then. The coal strikes, rail strikes, engineering strikes, building lock-out, unemployment crisis, etc., recorded in the newspapers of the pre-war period—pah! we have forgotten them, therefore they do not exist. There was a heaven sent "balance" between one occupation and another. The balance presumably was the uniformity with which workers in all trades approximated to the poverty line. So obvious, so uniform was it, that Campbell Bannerman served up the refreshing statement that thirteen millions of the nation were constantly on the verge of starvation. That unfortunate war, which only killed a million or so of them, has upset the balance. How annoying. We must have "something on the analogy of a Wages Board," to get us all back to that delightful pre-war balance arrangement.

The *Daily Graphic*, that odd Victorian survival, badly grafted with a latter-day bud, felt the situation called for a leader from them. Peppered with the muddled clichés of rotund suburbia: "Irritation," "disgust," "disgrace to trade unionism," "intimidation," "bludgeoning," it is nevertheless, not without humour. Compare "The same, or very nearly the same, result would have been achieved had the men, instead of striking, merely threatened to strike . . ." with this:—

It is possibly true that he (Mr. Bevin) has extorted a shilling or so more than the men would have accepted if the strike had not been in operation. That may be a "triumph" for him, but it is a triumph for force, and force will not always triumph.

Dear! Dear!! Thoroughly naughty boys these strikers are, to be sure.

And now for the *Daily Herald*. This paper did not deem the strike worthy of a leading article that day, but contented itself with comments in the news columns. Nothing is specially worth preserving except the following:—

The strike has also been remarkable in that the Government felt compelled to prepare to invoke the powers of the Emergency Powers Act.

Had the underground railways been stopped, a Royal Proclamation was ready to have been issued on Saturday last, declaring a "state of emergency."

The Prime Minister and other members of the Government took an active part in arranging the negotiations which made that step unnecessary.

Need we remind you that the Emergency Powers Act was the legitimate offspring of Dora, the ruthless measure by means of which all criticism or independence was bludgeoned into submission during the war for freedom? No Act was so plaintively reviled by the *Herald* and the sentimental pacifists, than Dora. As the war receded and conditions approached "normal," its place was taken by the Emergency Powers Act, a measure which provides for practically dictatorial government, on the declaration of an "emergency." We hope the workers will not allow themselves to forget that it was a Labour Government that enjoyed the signal honour of being the first to invoke the Emergency Powers Act. You will be wondering what different action a "Capitalist" Government would have taken. Wonder no longer. Simply reflect that a Capitalist Government could do nothing worse. There is nothing worse. It is Capitalism's trump card. Labour played it—nearly. Do not forget that.

W. T. H.

NOW ON SALE.

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OF

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### HOW WE LIVE.

At Brighton recently the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches held its Annual Assembly. The speakers included Ramsay Macdonald, Sir Oliver Lodge, Lloyd George, and several Divines. They spoke on religion, science, politics, and various social matters. Confusion was great, and a splendid selection of subjects for Socialist criticism was provided. But alas! our time and space is limited. Therefore I have selected from the mishmash what I consider to be a most glaring example of absurdity. This item of "wisdom" was uttered by Mr Ramsay Macdonald. Here it is:—"We live by faith, not by fact."—*Daily Telegraph*, 7/3/24. Would you believe it! However, in fairness to Mr. Macdonald, and in the words of Marx, let us look at the matter a little closer.

What is faith? In this case faith is belief, or trust, in a religious system, the head of which is God. In short, faith is belief in God. What is fact? Fact is truth, reality, something that actually happens; something that is made known to us by one, or more, of our five senses; something we can see, or feel, or hear, or smell. Now we cannot know God through our senses. That is to say, he does not show himself to us; we cannot hear him speak or sing; we cannot shake hands with him. We cannot send a letter or a telegram to God, because we do not know his address, neither are there any means of communication with his supposed place of abode. The reason of this negation is, there is "no sich persun." The idea of God was born through mankind's ignorance of the workings of Nature. God did not create man; on the contrary, man created God. God only exists in the imagination, and has no external existence. We only hear of God what it pleases certain people, for certain reasons, to tell us. Thus, we live by faith. Faith in what? Something that does not really exist. Marvellous! Now, you workers, who have been out of work, and had faith, know perfectly well that your faith did not keep you alive. In order to live you had to eat, drink, and sleep; you had to be clothed and have shelter. You have learned that to get a sufficiency of these things you must work. Thus you live by reality, or

fact. You workers who are out of work and have faith, just study the above statements and you will see that they meet your case also. Those of you who have never been out of work and have faith, ask yourself why you work. You will learn that you work to get the realities stated above so that you can live. You know that if you depended on faith to keep you alive you would very soon cease to exist as living human beings. And do the Eminent Divines—the "most faithful"—live by faith? Oh! dear no, they live, very much, by fact. The Archbishop of Canterbury, for instance, enjoys a stipend of £15,000 a year. The Bishop of London gets £10,000 a year. The Gloomy Dean Inge gets £2,000 a year, and Ramsay himself, at present, enjoys a salary of £5,000 a year. Now if we live by faith why do these people require these large incomes? Because they can only live by fact. And so in opposition to Mr. Macdonald: We live by fact, not by faith. The Prime Minister increases his absurdity in the same speech:—"The temporal can never receive quality except from the Infinite, and until our Churches and politicians seize upon that and bring the nation back to fundamental facts, you can pass," etc. How Churches can seize anything I do not know. "And bring the nation back to fundamental facts." We assume he means the British nation, and so, suppose, that the other nations of the world have nothing to do with the matter. And why bring the nation back to fundamental facts if we live by faith? According to Mr. Macdonald we do not live by fact, therefore, it is obvious, fact is useless to us. Why, then, does he suggest that the churches and politicians undertake—what to me seems a very difficult task—to bring the nation back to something which is useless to it? Simply a waste of time and energy. Here is a poser for Ramsay. If we live by faith, not by fact, why the dickens has he troubled himself for many years with politics? The truth of the matter is that Religion is a part of the means by which the Capitalist Class keep you in ignorance. These "intellectual" and "Christian" people who take part in the "dirty" work do so because their social and financial positions depend upon it.

These "Judas's", know that when the workers learn that they suffer want,

poverty, and the evils arising therefrom, because they are robbed of the wealth they produce, it will be "all-up" with the wretched system the Judases uphold—the Capitalist System. This article contains a statement to the effect that God has no external existence, but only exists in the imagination. Even to-day many people consider this to be a very grave and terrible statement. However, should anyone desire more convincing evidence we recommend the study of our pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion."

Here will be found sufficient facts to steer one from the Mystical World to the Scientific World; from the world of misunderstanding to the world of understanding, that is, of course, should they desire to make the journey. Fellow workers, don't forget, Study Socialism. C.

### "THE PROCESSION OF PROTRACTED DEATH."

When the average working class child comes into the world it is faced with circumstances that are a foretaste of the miseries to come. The poor food that is the best its parents can provide destroy the digestive system. The poor houses into which it crowds, cramps and deprives it of the necessary light and fresh air. The sordid surroundings develop a miserable outlook on life—an outlook from which the hills, the seas and the flowers are excluded. How many children there are in the large industrial towns that have never seen the sea, that know not the delight of a flowery field or the wonder of lovely mountains!

At school the child is crammed with knowledge it cannot assimilate, knowledge that as a rule is of a kind to make the child a good work beast, not of a kind that would make it a happy. Its playground is generally the street, where it plays marbles, football or tops, whilst dodging the traffic.

Though still a child, its "education" ceases at twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years of age, and it enters some factory hell to learn how to endure poisoned or broken fingers; to forget play; to answer the hooter; to swear and tell filthy stories, and to work until the eyes ache and the limbs tremble, all for a few shillings a week.

Childhood passes into manhood in the midst of the degrading and toilsome struggle

for a livelihood. The form is cramped and twisted and wasted in the struggle to keep pace with the machine. Alternating periods of furious toil and idleness take the elasticity out of the frame and the youthful zest for life out of the brain.

A few short years and the child becomes a hopeless and depressed work beast without even the desire for anything better.

If the frequent accidents, diseases, or starvation that are the products of modern industrialism do not bring life to an earlier end, the heavy hand of industry crushes the life out of the worker when he should be in his prime, and his life closes in the grave before he has had an opportunity of reaping benefit from his toil.

How many workers escape this curse of their inheritance? Their lives are but a procession of protracted death. But they could be something different.

"Civilisation," "Progress," the bore of modern politicians, is but the sweating and the destruction of workers. Yet, it need not be so.

The capacity of production is tremendous, but this capacity is utilised to make easeful and joyous the lives of useless idlers. When the workers demand and obtain control of the means of production, their lives will cease to mean a living death to them but will be for all a procession of protracted pleasure. It is for this that we are working and struggling.

GILMAC.

### SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

The Socialist Educational Society of New York have, by permission of the S.P.G.B., reprinted the above pamphlet. The S.P.G.B. are the sole agents for the pamphlet in this country, and copies can be obtained from Head Office at 5d. each, postage 1d. extra, special terms for quantities.

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## A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

In opposition to the conventional notion that the present form of society has always existed, the Socialist points out that it has existed for not more than a few centuries, and was preceded by other forms of society. In point of fact, the life history of the human race is made up of a series of fundamental changes in social relations.

Broadly speaking, mankind have experienced four distinct forms of society, which are Primitive Communism, Chattel Slavery, Feudalism, and Capitalism. However, the knowledge of the changes in society must necessarily be connected with a knowledge of the causes underlying the changes.

Many attempts have been made by historians in the past to find the main cause or causes behind social development. Prior to the middle of the 19th century (excluding Vico, who has been called "the father of the philosophy of history") the general conception of history was based upon the notion that the causes of all social changes are to be found in the changes in man's ideas, and that the most important of all social changes are those of a purely political character. But as to the cause of the changes in man's ideas, and what are the motive forces behind political changes remained a mystery until the time mentioned above, i.e., the middle of the 19th century. Conspicuous among the few historians who laboured to find a solution to the problem of social change, and to make a science of history, was Thomas Henry Buckle, the author of that useful work, "The History of Civilisation in England." Rejecting the unscientific explanations of those who had endeavoured to show that the affairs of human society are the result of chance, free will, or supernatural interference, he sought for the explanation of historical development in man's material conditions. In the second chapter of the first volume of his work, when dealing with the influence of physical laws on human society, Buckle states:—

If we enquire what those physical agents are by which the human race is most powerfully influenced, we shall find that they may be classed under four heads, namely, Climate, Food, Soil, and the General Aspect of Nature, by which last I mean those appearances which, though presented chiefly to the sight, have, through the medium of

that or other senses, directed the association of ideas and hence in different countries have given rise to the different habits of national thought.

But, as a satisfactory explanation of the cause of social change, this theory of Buckle's failed. Unquestionably the factors emphasised by him have played an important part in influencing the ideas and institutions of human society, particularly when society was in its earlier stages of development, but it cannot be shown that climatic and geographical conditions are the driving force behind the changes that have taken place in society throughout historic times. The truth of this is not difficult to grasp when it is noted that, compared with the various changes in society, the climatic and geographical conditions of man's environment have, broadly speaking, remained stationary throughout human history.

The solution of the problem we are considering, namely, the main cause of social change, was discovered by the founders of the modern Socialist movement, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, and was first publicly announced by them in their joint work, "The Communist Manifesto," published in 1848. These two men working independently of each other came to the same conclusion, namely, that it was the economic development that formed the motive force of social development, resulting in the changes in the forms of society. Marx and Engels saw that the foundation of human society was an economic one, and that the whole structure of society rested upon this economic foundation. That the way in which wealth is produced and distributed gives rise to and in the main determines the form of the social system. Therefore, the solution of the problem of social change is to be found in the changes which take place in the means and methods by which society gets its living, and not, as was thought hitherto, in the changes in man's ideas and ideals.

This view of the historical development of human society is known as the materialist conception of history, and is explained, in a brief way, by Engels, as follows:—

The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life, and next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders, is dependent upon what is produced, how

it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch.—*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, page 45.

This discovery of the motive force of history ranks as one of the great discoveries of the 19th century, and is being more and more adopted by historians as the basis of historical research.

In passing, it may prove of interest to record how these two men were ready to credit each other for their respective shares in making the discovery. In the preface to his work, "The Critique of Political Economy," after giving a brief summary of the materialist conception of history, Marx points out that Engels, with whom he had corresponded and exchanged ideas, "came by a different road to the same conclusion as myself (see his "Condition of the Working Class in England")."

On the other hand, Engels, in a footnote to his work on Fierbach, makes the following statement:—

It is incumbent upon me to make a personal explanation at this place. People have lately referred to my share in this theory, and I can hardly refrain from saying a few words here in settlement of that particular matter.

I cannot deny that I had before and during my forty years' collaboration with Marx a certain independent share, not only in laying out the foundations, but more particularly in working out the theory. But the greatest part of the leading essential thinking, particularly in the realm of economics, and especially its final sharp statement, belongs to Marx alone. What Marx supplied I could not have readily brought. Marx stood higher, saw farther, took a wider, clearer, quicker survey than all of us. Marx was a genius; we others, at the best, talented. Without him the theory would not be what it is to-day by a long way. It therefore rightly bears his name.

Surely, these references are an indication of a not altogether unhealthy sign in these two "gross materialists," as they were styled by their opponents.

However, Marx and Engels were not entirely alone in making this discovery of "the law of historical development."

Apparently without any knowledge of their writings, Lewis Henry Morgan, the great American Ethnologist, came to substantially the same conclusion. Through his investigations into the conditions of the savage and barbarian tribes, chiefly of the

North American Indians, with whom he had lived for many years, Morgan came to certain conclusions regarding the life history of the human race. In his greatest work, "Ancient Society," in which he traces the main lines of human progress from savagery through barbarism to civilisation, he shows that the extent of man's supremacy over the forces of nature is determined by man's ability to produce the means of subsistence. The following quotation from his work may be said to sum up his view of the matter:—

The important fact that mankind commenced at the bottom of the scale and worked up, is revealed in an expressive manner by their successive arts of subsistence. Upon their skill in this direction, the whole question of human supremacy on the earth depended. Mankind are the only beings who may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food; which at the outset they did not possess above other animals. Without enlarging the basis of subsistence, mankind could not have propagated themselves into other areas not possessing the same kinds of food, and ultimately over the whole surface of the earth; and lastly, without obtaining an absolute control over both its variety and amount, they could not have multiplied into populous nations. It is accordingly probable that the great epochs of human progress have been identified, more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence.—*Ancient Society*, page 19.

This view, it will be noted, is practically identical with the view of Marx and Engels.

A considerable amount of criticism has been levelled against Marx and Engels on the ground that they were supposed to have subordinated the whole of human history to the workings of economic laws. It is alleged by some of their critics that they failed to take into account the influence of such important factors as ideas, geography, climate, etc., and that the Materialist Conception of history leads to an "economic fatalism."

These criticisms are, however, based upon either an inability to understand, or an ability to deliberately misrepresent.

That the influence of man's ideas, and also the importance of the other factors mentioned, were taken into account by Marx and Engels, when stating and applying the Materialist Conception of history we intend to show in a further article on the subject.

R. REYNOLDS.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

MAY,



1924

**KING CANUTE UP-TO-DATE.**

There is a restiveness amongst the workers. There is a growing revolt against the present particularly depressed state of wages. Workers on the railway, in the shipyards, and in the transport services have already taken action to improve their conditions and there are threats of similar action being taken by other workers; amongst them the mine workers.

These are welcome signs to us. The pendulum is swinging back again after the abject acceptance of the sweeping reductions in wages and speeding up of work during the past few years.

But though these are welcome signs to us they are not welcome to the employers, and the latter are urging that some method be adopted to pacify the workers and turn their attention away from wages and conditions of employment.

An editorial in the *Daily Mail* for April 3rd draws attention to an appeal that has been made denouncing Sunday politics. The *Daily Mail* urges that the abolition of Sunday politics will not help matters, but that the preachers and teachers should come down off their perches.

Our civilian officers will have to come off their perches. They will have to sacrifice a good deal of their Sabbath peace, including their Sunday afternoon round of golf, and come down into the

streets and go among the people. They know what things are and what facts mean. They will have to tackle resolutely and courageously the prejudices and misconceptions which have been instilled—while they remained inert—in so many honest but imperfectly informed minds.

The British working man is by nature fair-minded, just, willing to learn, and, above all, willing to talk things over. But he does not get a chance of correcting his misapprehensions. The absent are always wrong; and he sees very little, if anything, of the men who do the brain work of this country.

How artfully the case is put! The manager, the professor, the cleric, the M.A., the B.A., and all the other lettered gentry; in other words, the "Intellectuals" or salaried officials are obviously those to whom the *Daily Mail* points a reproving finger. How these people will swell with importance on reading such complimentary remarks. And yet it is nothing but "spoof." "Spoof" for the "intellectual" and "spoof" for the worker. Where were the "brains" when the London transport services ceased to operate? We were promised that awful calamities—the collapse of the food supply, the break-down of commerce—if these refractory workers continued to adhere to the principle of freedom of contract by withholding their labour power until they obtained better pay.

But who are the intellectuals, the salaried officials, anyway? They are simply a particular section of the working class, the most backward section, the most abject slaves—they who kiss the hand that smites them. They receive "honourable mention" when their performances assist the interests of the employers and the sack when their performances are unsuccessful. Like other workers they depend for their living upon the sale of their energies, and, like other workers, they go under if they can't find a ready sale for such energies.

All work done by workers under Capitalism requires the use of brains, and each kind of work is equally necessary.

The term "brain worker" is only a sop thrown to a particular section to ensure the continued support of Capitalism by that section. The sop is thrown with the old principle in the mind of the thrower—"Divide and Conquer." Set one section of workers against another and each will be so taken up with their sectional quarrel that they will overlook their fundamental solidarity as wage-workers.

The Northcliffe millions have been piled

**OUR DAILY BREAD.**

The "Blessings of Civilization" are continually being impressed upon us lest we waver and doubt that the modern world is the "best of all possible worlds."

Some of these "blessings" are painfully familiar to us, such as dodging death when crossing the streets, or dodging shells and gas during war-time, or trying to live on air during peace time. But there are other "blessings" that affect us just as painfully, only we are apt to miss them as they are dressed up in a very pleasing and becoming manner.

One of these latter "blessings" is brought to our notice by "An Economist" in the *Daily Mail* (April 3rd, 1924). This particular "blessing" is white bread—"The Staff of life."

Its whiteness gives it an inviting and pleasing appearance, but the cause of this whiteness is—guess what? The introduction of poisonous chemicals—introduced so that the employers of the bread producers may make greater profits.

Here is "An Economist's" statement of the constituents of white bread. Now read what modern civilization provides for your consumption:—

Most of the bread on sale at present is of very inferior quality and is chemically treated with a view to improving its appearance.

Wheat of very inferior quality is imported and ground into flour, and the bulk of this inferior flour is bleached by means of chemicals and gases into startling whiteness. Thus it is given fraudulently the appearance of high-quality flour which is naturally white.

From the millers the flour goes to the bakers, who convert it into bread, and the majority of bakers add to it other chemicals euphemistically called "improvers," by means of which they can convert a given quantity of flour into a larger number of loaves.

In other words, the "improvement" brought about by the "improvers" consists in this—that the public gets an artificially waterlogged and blown-up loaf.

Now, having read the above, how thankful we should be that we reap the advantages of progress! Think of the poor savage, over whom the learned professor delights to mourn, doomed to the misery of consuming the unadulterated products of Nature instead of the refined article produced by modern ingenuity—and fiendishism!

GILMAC.

up by the Northcliffe papers providing glib workers with carefully doctored news, and the suppressing or glossing over of the glaring and ugly facts of working class life. The relations between master and worker are daily dealt with in a way that obscures the fundamental antagonism of interests that exists between the two. The fact, for instance, that the master thrives on the unpaid labour extracted from the worker. But the Press method of propaganda is not proving sufficient, powerful though it is. The foundations upon which the Northcliffe and other millions are built are being slowly but surely undermined. To hinder this process, therefore, the Northcliffe paper advocates a more vigorous vocal propaganda to go along with the written.

Alas for the Capitalist the *Daily Mail* proposal is analogous to the attempt, made by King Canute many years ago, to stop the movement of the ocean with the human voice.

**THE SOCIALIST VIEW OF RELIGION.**

Readers of the *Standard* desirous of information on the above matter are referred to the notice appearing on page 133 of this issue. Since our pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion," went out of print, the need for a scientific exposition of the Socialist case against Religion has become more urgent. The pamphlet is the official pronouncement of the S.P.G.B., and since it was first issued has remained the most concise and accurate summary of the facts available. Lack of funds has prevented us from reprinting this pamphlet. However, our comrades of the S.E.S. of New York have published an American edition. Copies of this edition can be obtained from Head Office.

Meanwhile, we take this opportunity of reminding the friends and sympathisers of the S.P.G.B. that we are desirous of placing, not only a third English edition of *Socialism and Religion* on the market, but other pamphlets of equal importance to the working class. Shortage of cash prevents us from fulfilling these objects. We therefore appeal to those of our readers in a position to help to do so by augmenting our £1,000 Fund. Then shall we more effectively be able to counter the misrepresentations of the Capitalist Class.



## BY THE WAY.

The anti-Socialist tell us that under Socialism we should become a stereotyped humanity; but their use of the word "State," signifies that it is really State Capitalism to which they refer, Socialism implying the abolition of the State, to-day a Capitalist institution. Commenting on a recent play in which the central idea is the invention of mechanical men, a writer says:—

These robots had all, and more than all, the material efficiency of human beings, but no soul, no heart, none of those attributes which make life individual and interesting. That is what your Socialist would have you and me be like in his perfect Socialist state.—*Democrat*, April 12th, 1924.

Think of your individuality when the hooter goes and you clock on at the dog biscuit factory or the soap works, think how interesting the routine of the office, the beautiful scenery viewed by a carman, or watching the beer in the brewery, calculating how much you and your pals could account for if only you had it outside. Ah! you see you've a soul (!), and having one, perhaps a further item, same paper, same date will interest you:—

Where are these small but important details that used to make our houses feel like homes? We do not find these things to-day. All the happiness has gone out of our houses. They are all alike, all plain and dull. For all the distinction or variation there are in them, they might be so many bathing machines or hen-coops.

And in like manner you will find most of the "bogey" of Socialism right here to-day.

\* \* \*

There is one reasoned alternative to Socialism, the very simple yet perfectly true doctrine that small families and willing work would quickly banish poverty from our country.—*New Voice*, April.

This doctrine, we are told, will win the support of the wavering masses, who in desperation are inclined "to give the Socialists a trial"; and although it contains reason, truth, work, and gutta-percha economics, we remain cold and unmoved. Smaller families mean cheaper living, and in the age of competition and sliding scales, cheaper living frequently means lowered wages. The more willing you work to-day, the fewer of you will be required for the job in hand, that means more unemployment, and therefore more poverty. The "reasoned alternative" to Socialism may appear

"very simple," but only to simple people.

The nation to-day is not producing enough to satisfy the natural human demands of the workers. . . . The demands for a decent standard of life have been increasing, but the means of satisfying them have not increased; and to demand what is not there is crying for the moon.—*Daily Chronicle*, 31.3.24.

What an indictment of the present system! In the world's richest country the "natural human demands" for its workers cannot be met, so the *Chronicle* leader writer informs us, and by the naive assumption that "the Nation" would be one harmonious entity but for these demands, he attempts to conceal the cause of the contrast of wealth and poverty, and the inevitable conflict between the propertyless producers of wealth and its non-working Capitalist owners. Even for the workers to demand a "decent standard of life" is with true Liberal cant considered "crying for the Moon." But the idle shareholders; they evidently may smile complacently upon the earth. Take only one instance, typical of the average concern, and what a difference we find in the reward of abstinence—from the dignity of labour:—

The twenty-second annual report of the Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain and Ireland), Limited, issued last night, shows a nett trading profit for twelve months ended October 31st, 1923, amounting to £7,467,925 12s. 10d.—*Daily Mail*, 9.2.24.

What are the facts? Man's power over Nature reached the stage of being able to maintain an idle ruling class in the dim and remote past; this he could only do when he could produce more than was necessary for his own individual subsistence, later in the middle ages, roughly fifteen weeks' labour of the year enabled a labourer to sustain a family of five for that period (Thorold Rogers), while to-day, modern manufacture with its giant machines, electricity, railways and applied science, makes production possible on a scale that could far outstrip societies' needs. Yet the workers are poor! and the best reason the Capitalist Press can advance is a dirty lie. The invention and industry of countless generations of workers HAS increased the means to satisfy the most extravagant demands ever likely to be made upon them, BUT those means are the property of the few, and operated solely in their interests. Need we stress the point?

\* \* \*

"But we have yet to meet the Socialist who's willing to learn anything from anybody without doubting the motive of his teachers." (*Democrat*, 9/2/24.)

Within the Capitalist system there are thousands of "anybodies" laying claim to be the teachers of the working class.

All profess to be in deepest sympathy with the sufferings of that class, and every library is filled with their voluminous vapourings. The Socialist, however, did not obtain his understanding by blindly accepting every nostrum that was placed before him. His mental evolution has been through the stages of doubt, investigation to understanding. He does not consider his the final word in knowledge, but is ever prepared to enlarge that knowledge. Unlike the Capitalist supporting worker, the Socialist reasons from a class basis, his class interests, for it is only from that basis that he can judge the usefulness or otherwise of any teaching to his class. Through the method of discussion and critical enquiry men and women develop the power to reason for themselves. Our advice to the worker in this age of political chicanery is to trust none, but to acquire that learning that dispenses with the need for trust or doubt and enables them to test the teachings offered, written or oral, on the touchstone of Socialist knowledge.

\* \* \*

"Socialism meant complete destruction of private property and individual liberty. God save England from Socialism." (Harold Cox, *The New Voice*, Feb.)

The worker may read the above and yet retain his composure. The property referred to is not his watch and chain or the odds and ends that often find their way to "Uncle," but Capitalist property, the bulk of the wealth of modern society. It is usual for Capitalist apologists to speak or write of Marx as "exploded" or out of date, but how his words meet the whines of that class and their agents to-day.

"You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths." (Reeves, Ed., p. 18, Communist Manifesto.)

The above was written nearly eighty years ago, but Capitalist development has but served to emphasise these facts. The Capitalist pretends to see in his form of private property (the ownership of societies'

means of wealth production) a form that permits of no further development without social stagnation and the destruction of what he terms individual liberty.

"The abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! . . . By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying." (*Ibid.*)

The freedom to exploit and plunder a working class free only to sell their labour power—if they can. Property in its present form is but a transient form, it will undergo change when there is no further room for development within the present system. The main force generated within that system and the human factor that must bring that change, is the growing conscious discontent of the working class, who in order to achieve their emancipation must realise that the barrier of freedom and comfort for all stands in the present socially operated, but privately-owned means of life. The only possible alternative is social ownership, by which the evils of to-day will be removed and the communal form of society in which the human family was cradled for so many thousands of years restored on an infinitely higher plane.

MAC.

## £1,000 FUND.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged	..	..	..	966	9	7
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A.S.C./185/21:3:24



## THE QUICK CHANGE ARTIST.

At the moment Winston Churchill is very much in the public eye on account of his latest change of front. He was once a Conservative, then he became a Liberal, and lately he appears to have returned to the Conservative ranks again. But in one thing he is at least consistent, he has always supported Capitalism and has not pretended to do anything else.

There is another man, once very much in the public eye, but now a setting star. This other man is Tom Mann. He has also changed his front many times, but he also has at least been consistent in one thing—consistent in advancing the personal interests of one Tom Mann.

For years Tom Mann waved the big stick of Industrial unionism and cut capers on platforms whilst pouring scorn upon Political Action as a weapon in the working-class struggle for emancipation. We have, on previous occasion, given examples of the way in which this platform pantaloons at one time backs industrial action and at another political action. A recent illustration of his change of front moves us to extract one or two more examples from his record.

The *Labour Leader* of June 20th, 1918, issued an appeal inviting workers to join the I.L.P. The following extract is from this appeal:—

We must not go back to pre-war conditions—else why all the sacrifice of the war? We must have a fuller life—which is only possible on Socialist lines advocated by the I.L.P. This Party, of which we, the undersigned are members, is growing rapidly, is a fine propagandist body, and will assist to co-ordinate the industrial and political efforts of the Unions. We must not forget all we owe to the I.L.P. in the past.

Amongst the names of those who signed the above appeal (wherein it is stated that the "undersigned are members" of the I.L.P.) appears that of Tom Mann, the industrial unionist!

Later on Tom Mann signed the Trade Union Leaders' Manifesto supporting the League of Nations. Item 4 of this Manifesto runs as follows:—

4. The prospect of another and still greater war is one we must either prepare for by vaster armaments than ever, or prevent. The first alternative is unthinkable. There remains only prevention. Prevention is possible by the League of Nations to enforce the peace. There is no other way.—*The Times*, 7.11.19.

Is this Tom Mann the Industrialist or Tom Mann the I.L.P.'er who signs the Manifesto? If the "League of Nations" is the only way to prevent war, then where does Socialism come in? A very little examination of the "League of Nations" should convince those who will look at it from the working-class standpoint that it cannot prevent wars in a Capitalist world because it leaves the cause of wars untouched. It has a two-fold object. It is a method by which a section of the Capitalist Class hope to cut down the enormous sums they have to throw away on large armaments, and it is also a convenient method of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and keeping them from finding the real cause of wars—the profit-making nature of the Capitalist system. The Capitalist hoodwinking scheme then has the support of Tom Mann.

In 1920 a pamphlet was issued by "The Labour Abstentionist Party" (a party that was still-born). This party advocated:—

(a) Securing the election of Parliamentary Candidates pledged to abstain from taking their seats; (b) Propagation of the futility of Parliamentary action.

The "Foreword" to the pamphlet was written by Tom Mann and the following extracts are taken from it:—

The workers are travelling rapidly in the direction of obtaining control of industry. They will travel with accelerating speed as they learn the unwisdom of relying upon Parliament.

The glamour of Parliament naturally has attractions which many good men are reluctant to forego; as these comrades grow in strength and clearness of view they will discard the plutocratic institution and learn the wisdom of *Direct Action*, and complete control of industrial affairs in the communal interest.

I therefore heartily commend this pamphlet as being in my judgment calculated to be really educative in enabling readers to estimate Parliamentary action correctly, and to see the necessity for *Industrial Solidarity*.

Here we have a change back again to *Direct Action*—he has apparently grown (backwards!) in strength and clearness and discarded the "plutocratic institution"

But now we come to the cream of the business—the "real currant bun." The monthly journal of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, number forty-four, March, 1924, has been brought to our notice, and was the immediate inspiration of

this article. On turning to page 6 we find the following:—

## ELECTION OF THREE PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES, 1924.

The following have accepted nomination for the above positions. All pay the Political Levy and accept the objects, policy, and programme of the Labour Party, and are prepared to accept a constituency in the event of being selected. (Italics ours.)

On looking down the list of those who "have accepted nomination," etc., we find among them

Mann, T., Woolwich, 6th.

So the Labour abstentionist has grown further in "strength and clearness" and is back in the Parliamentary fold trying to get a seat in the "plutocratic institution"! He accepts "the objects, policy, and programme" of the party which assisted in sending thousands of working men to the battlefield and whose present programme includes the settling of strikes, the increase of armaments, and the attendance at glorious feasts provided by their wealthy patrons—the Capitalists.

We have given the above particulars not because any great importance attaches to Tom Mann (as a matter of fact among "labour leaders" he is practically a back number at the moment), but because his record offers a convenient illustration of the futility and foolishness of trusting in "leaders."

The antidote to the blind following of blind or tricky leaders is to arm yourself with the necessary knowledge that will acquaint you with the road you must travel to achieve your freedom from wage slavery. Once you have grasped the fundamentals of your position in society you will lay down the policy to be carried out and you will not require "leaders."

Popular idols are the abomination of working-class movements. Away with them!

GILMAC.

For fools are always fain  
To measure meanings by the gaudy show  
Of twisted words that hide them. And a strain  
That fills their ears with honeyed overflow  
Of phrase and music is at once decreed  
Surely to hold the very truth indeed.

Lucretius.

## MARX ON FREE TRADE.

A speech delivered before the Democratic Association of Brussels, at its public meeting, January 9th, 1848.

Reprinted from "The Poverty of Philosophy." (Twentieth Century Press, Ltd., London, 1900).

GENTLEMEN,—The repeal of the Corn Laws in England is the greatest triumph of Free Trade in the nineteenth century. In every country where manufacturers speak of Free Trade, they have in mind chiefly Free Trade in corn or raw material generally. To burden foreign corn with protective duties is infamous, it is to speculate on the hunger of the people.

Cheap food, high wages, for this alone the English Free Traders have spent millions, and their enthusiasm has already infected their continental brethren. And, generally speaking, all those who advocate Free Trade do so in the interests of the working class.

But, strange to say, the people for whom cheap food is to be procured at all costs are very ungrateful. Cheap food has as bad a reputation in England as cheap government has in France. The people see in these self-sacrificing gentlemen, in Bowring, Bright and Co., their worst enemies and the most shameless hypocrites.

Everyone knows that in England the struggle between Liberals and Democrats takes the name of the struggle between Free Traders and Chartists. Let us see how the English Free Traders have proved to the people the good intentions that animate them.

This is what they said to the factory hands:—

"The duty on corn is a tax upon wages; this tax you pay to the landlords, those mediæval aristocrats. If your position is a wretched one, it is so only on account of the high price of the most indispensable articles of food."

The workers in turn asked of the manufacturers:—

"How is it that in the course of the last thirty years, while our commerce and manufacture has immensely increased, our wages have fallen far more rapidly, in proportion, than the price of corn has gone up?"

"The tax which you say we pay the landlords is scarcely 3d. a week per worker. And yet the wages of the hand-loom weaver fell, between 1815 and 1843, from 28s. per week to 5s., and the wages of the power-loom weavers, between 1823 and 1843, from 20s. per week to 8s."

"And during the whole of the time that portion



of the tax which you say we pay the landlord has never exceeded 3d. And then, in the year 1834, when bread was very cheap and business brisk, what did you tell us? You said, 'If you are poor, it is only because you have too many children, and your marriages are more productive than your labour!'

"These are the very words you spoke to us, and you set about making new Poor Laws, and building workhouses, those bastilles of the proletariat."

To this the manufacturers replied:—

"You are right, worthy labourers. It is not the price of corn alone, but competition of the hands among themselves as well, which determines wages."

"But just bear in mind the circumstance that our soil consists of nothing but rocks and sandbanks. You surely do not imagine that corn can be grown in flowerpots! Therefore, if, instead of wasting our labour and capital upon a thoroughly sterile soil, we were to give up agriculture, and devote ourselves exclusively to commerce and manufacture, all Europe would abandon its factories, and England would form one huge factory town, with the whole of the rest of Europe for its agricultural districts."

While thus haranguing his own working men, the manufacturer is interrogated by the small tradesmen, who exclaim:—

"If we repeal the Corn Laws we shall indeed ruin agriculture; but, for all that, we shall not compel other nations to give up their own factories and buy our goods. What will the consequences be? I lose my customers in the country, and the home market is destroyed."

The manufacturer turns his back upon the working men, and replies to the shopkeeper:—

"As to that, you leave it to us! Once rid of the duty on corn, we shall import cheaper corn from abroad. Then we shall reduce wages at the very time when they are rising in the countries where we get our corn. Thus, in addition to the advantages which we already enjoy, we shall have lower wages, and, with all these advantages, we shall easily force the Continent to buy of us."

But now the farmers and agricultural labourers join in the discussion:—

"And what, pray, is to become of us? Are we to help in passing a sentence of death upon agriculture, when we get our living by it? Are we to let the soil be torn from beneath our feet?"

For all answer the Anti-Corn Law League contented itself with offering prizes for the three best essays upon the wholesome influence of the Repeal of the Corn Laws on English agriculture.

These prizes were carried off by Messrs. Hope, Morse and Greg, whose essays were distributed by thousands throughout the agricultural districts. One of the prize essayists devotes himself to proving that

neither the tenant farmer nor the agricultural labourer would lose by the repeal of the Corn Laws, and that the landlord alone would lose.

"The English tenant farmer," he exclaims, "need not fear repeal, because no other country can produce such good corn so cheaply as England. Thus, even if the price of corn fell, it would not hurt you, because this fall would only affect rent, which would go down, while the profit of capital and the wages of labour would remain stationary."

The second prize essayist, Mr. Morse, maintains, on the contrary, that the price of corn will rise in consequence of repeal. He is at infinite pains to prove that protective duties have never been able to secure a remunerative price for corn.

In support of his assertion he quotes the fact that, wherever foreign corn has been imported, the price of corn in England has gone up considerably, and that when little corn has been imported the price has fallen greatly. This prize-winner forgets that the importation was not the cause of the high price, but that the high price was the cause of the importation. In direct contradiction of his colleague, he asserts that every rise in the price of corn is profitable to both the tenant farmer and labourer, but does not benefit the landlord.

The third prize essayist, Mr. Greg, who is a large manufacturer and whose work is addressed to the large tenant farmers, could not afford to echo such silly stuff. His language is more scientific.

He admits that the Corn Laws can increase rent only by increasing the price of corn, and that they can raise the price of corn only by inducing the investment of capital upon land of inferior quality, and this is a perfectly natural explanation.

In proportion as population increases, it inevitably follows, if foreign corn cannot be imported, that less fruitful soil must be called into requisition, the cultivation of which involves more expense and the product of which is consequently dearer. There being a demand for all the corn thus produced it will all be sold. The price for all of it will of necessity be determined by the price of the product of the inferior soil. The difference between this price and the cost of production upon soil of better quality constitutes the rent paid for the use of the better soil.

If, therefore, in consequence of the repeal of the Corn Laws, the price of corn falls,

and if, as a matter of course, rent falls with it, it is because inferior soil will no longer be cultivated. Thus the reduction of rent must inevitably ruin a number of the tenant farmers.

These remarks are necessary in order to make Mr. Greg's language comprehensible.

"The small farmers," he says, "who cannot support themselves by agriculture must take refuge in manufacture. As to the large tenant farmers, they cannot fail to profit by the arrangement; either the landlord will be obliged to sell them their land very cheap, or leases will be made out for very long periods. This will enable tenant farmers to invest more capital in their farms, to use agricultural machinery on a larger scale, and to save manual labour, which will, moreover, be cheaper, on account of the general fall in wages, the immediate consequence of the repeal of the Corn Laws."

Dr. Bowring conferred upon all these arguments the consecration of religion, by exclaiming at a public meeting, "Jesus Christ is Free Trade, and Free Trade is Jesus Christ."

It may be easily understood that all this cant was not calculated to make cheap bread tasteful to working men.

Besides, how should the working men understand the sudden philanthropy of the manufacturers, the very men who were still busy fighting against the Ten Hours Bill, which was to reduce the working day of the mill hands from twelve hours to ten?

To give you an idea of the philanthropy of these manufacturers I would remind you of the factory regulations in force in all their mills.

Every manufacturer has for his own special use a regular penal code, by means of which fines are inflicted for every voluntary or involuntary offence. For instance, the operative pays so much when he has the misfortune to sit down on a chair, or whisper, or speak, or laugh; if he is a few moments late; if any part of a machine breaks, or if he turns out work of an inferior quality, &c. The fines are always greater than the damage really done by the workman. And to give the working man every opportunity for incurring fines the factory clock is set forward, and he is given bad material to make into good stuff. An overseer unskilful in multiplying infractions of rules is soon discharged.

You see, gentlemen, this private legislation is enacted for the especial purpose of creating such infractions, and infractions

are manufactured for the purpose of making money. Thus the manufacturer uses every means of reducing the nominal wage, and even profiting by accidents over which the workers have no control.

And these manufacturers are the same philanthropists who have tried to persuade the workers that they were capable of going to immense expense for the sole and express purpose of improving the conditions of these same working men! On the one hand they nibble at the workers' wages in the meanest way by means of factory regulations, and, on the other, they are prepared to make the greatest sacrifices to raise those wages by means of the Anti-Corn Law League.

They build great palaces, at immense expense, in which the League takes up its official residence. They send an army of missionaries to all corners of England to preach the gospel of Free Trade; they print and distribute gratis thousands of pamphlets to enlighten the working man upon his own interests. They spend enormous sums to buy over the Press to their side. They organise a vast administrative system for the conduct of the Free Trade movement, and bestow all the wealth of their eloquence upon public meetings. It was at one of these meetings that a working man exclaimed boldly:—

"If the landlords were to sell our bones, you manufacturers would be the first to buy them and to put them through the mill and make flour of them."

The English working men have appreciated to the fullest extent the significance of the struggle between the lords of the land and of capital. They knew very well that the price of bread was to be reduced in order to reduce wages, and that the profit of capital would rise in proportion as rent fell.

Ricardo, the apostle of the English Free Traders, the leading economist of our century, entirely agrees with the workers upon this point.

In his celebrated work upon political economy he says:—

"If, instead of growing our own corn . . . we discover a new market from which we can supply ourselves . . . at a cheaper price, wages will fall and profits rise. The fall in the price of agricultural produce reduces the wages, not only of the labourer employed in cultivating the soil, but also of all those employed in commerce or manufacture."

(To be continued)



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to A. Jones, 3 Matthew-st., Latchmere Estate, Battersea, S.W. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**DEPTFORD.**—Sec., J. Veasey, 24, Marlton-st., E. Greenwich, S.E. 10. Branch meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays in month, at 8 o'clock, at 435, New Cross-rd., S.E. Discussion after Branch business. Public invited.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at The Arcadians, 42, Amhurst-rd., Hackney Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., T. Travis, 25, Arthur Street, Cobridge, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., A. L. Myerson, 28, Brunswick St., Hightown, Manchester. Branch meets 83, Ducie St., near London-rd. Station, Gt. Ancoats St. end, every Thursday, at 8.30 p.m. Discussion class every Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m. Public invited to all our meetings.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Communications to Sec., 64, Park rd., Merton, S.W.19. Branch meets Fridays, at above address, at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 12, High Cross road, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to A. J. Godfrey, 30, Waverley road, Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.** Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Noel Park School, N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.**

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Leytonstone, The Green Man, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:** Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Friday:** Stratford, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Baths), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Edmonton, The Green, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## The Fraud of Reform

In spite of the manifest failure of the "Labour" Government to solve the problems facing the working class the majority of its supporters still seem to cling to the idea that such a government contains their only hope. The failure is excused on the ground that the Labour Party are in office but not in power, and it does not appear to strike those who echo this excuse that it is in itself an admission that the Labour Party is prepared to depend upon the support of sections of the master class in turn and to give the necessary services to that class in return. The execution by the "Labour" Government of various items of policy inherited from their Tory predecessors is overlooked and we are asked to be grateful for the abolition of the gap, promises of increased pensions and the reduction of indirect taxation.

The Labour Party's supporters appear to consider these acts as real measures of improvement of working class conditions, and that with a "Labour" majority in the House of Commons more blessings will descend on their patient heads. Let us examine the grounds for such assumption.

Take the abolition of the gap. The present writer recently heard one unemployed leader declare that even if the Government had done nothing else, this act alone entitled them to working class support. Yet, why was the unemployment insurance established in the first place? Was it to make existence easier for the unemployed? If so, then Lloyd George is entitled to support rather than the Labour

Party, who have merely modified one of his measures; but the object of National Insurance in all its forms for that matter was no piece of Capitalist philanthropy. The master class have not yet commenced to give us something for nothing.

Shortly before the abolition of the gap, the chairman of the Glasgow Parish Council gave away the key of the situation. In an interview with the Minister of Health, reported in the *Daily Herald*, he stated that the gap cost his Council £200,000 in outdoor relief. The Minister in the House of Commons announced that the abolition of the gap would cost the State an additional £500,000.

Thus, it is easy to see that two-fifths of the amount laid out by the State will be saved by the Glasgow property owners alone. Two other cities saving similar amounts would wipe out the outlay and show a profit for the "nation" of £100,000. The unemployed are merely transferred for the purpose of relief from the local to the national authorities because such centralisation is cheaper.

The same remarks apply to pensions. When Lloyd George introduced old age pensions, he pointed out that it cost more to maintain old slaves in workhouses than to give them a State pension. The State simply relieved the local authorities of part of the increasing financial burden caused by the increase of poverty among the workers. The Labour Party propose to carry the process a step further. They propose that a still greater share of the burden shall fall



on the National Exchequer knowing full well that this will result in a reduction of the amount paid out by the master class as a whole in proportion to the number of slaves pensioned.

What working man can seriously consider that the miserable pittance suggested really relieve poverty. If the intention is to make the pensioned ones comfortable and free from care, how are we to explain the scantiness of the means? Remember, fellow slaves, the millions squandered to make your masters' property safe by means of four years of carnage before you repeat the silly lie that there is not enough wealth to do it.

What applies to old age pensions, of course applies equally to mothers' pensions and so on. Mr. Arthur Henderson, during the Burnley bye-election, stated that the Government's object was to prevent needy mothers applying to the Poor Law authorities.

Generally we find the same dodge on the part of our masters. They pretend to give with one hand something but it is less than they take away with the other.

The anxiety of the Labour Government and its supporters to justify their existence in the eyes of the property owners was well exemplified in the debate on the administration of the Poplar area. The Minister of Health showed that the inability of his predecessors to enforce the Mond order proved that the Poplar Guardians had (in spite of accusations to the contrary) kept relief down to the minimum possible in view of the extreme destitution in the area concerned. George Lansbury proudly claimed that they had kept the peace in the East End for years. Who for? There is only one answer. The masters see in the rising tide of destitution a standing menace to the security of their property. The more starving men and women there are, the more danger there is of theft and other such crimes being committed. The choice is between increased protection in the shape of an additional police force and so-called "relief." It is cheaper to dole out a few "bob" per head to the hungry than to feed, clothe, house and equip a large staff of extra police, and so we find that as the years go on and the army of the unemployed mounts from hundreds of thousands to millions and the general scope of destitution grows larger, the dole has to be enlarged and the need for economy in its ad-

ministration becomes more keenly felt by the masters, from whose coffers it must come.

Hence we find centralisation schemes being adopted, extended and revised as experience and growing pressure dictates to our rulers. There is no "new spirit" embodied in the Labour Party's policy in this matter. All the pious bosh of Ramsay MacDonald and his gang merely accentuates their disgusting meanness and contempt for the interests of the class in whose name they profess to act. Their "Socialism" is merely the bourgeois variety mentioned by Marx and Engels in the "Communist Manifesto" which professes with its lips to serve the workers but in its actual practice simplifies and economises Capitalist government.

The reduction of taxation in any shape or form cannot benefit the workers as a class for the simple reason that their energy is a commodity, the price of which is based on the cost of living. Even if we grant for sake of argument that taxes affect prices in the long run, the reduction in the cost of living involves no improvement in the general condition of the workers. It only provides the masters with an opportunity and excuse for reducing wages. In fact, the greater part of the existence of the workers on the economic field may be summed up thus:—Fighting for a rise when prices go up and fighting against a reduction when prices fall.

Yet, in spite of these perfectly obvious facts, we have sentimental humbugs proclaiming themselves the workers' saviours because they have taken fourpence off tea. We are not impressed. They are merely imitators. Their Liberal precursors have given us our stomach-full long enough ago.

Fellow workers, so long as a small class possess the means of life, you will toil in poverty for them; and reforms will do nothing to lift the burden. Socialism alone will do that. Organise for the common ownership of the earth and all that the workers' hands have wrought.

E. B.

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## ON LOOKING AHEAD.

Socialism is not a cult, a creed or a fad. It is not a new religion. Socialism is the greatest idea the human mind has ever conceived. In the light of its teaching the march of human progress has barely begun. Mankind is still in its swaddling clothes. History, so far, has been the record of its blind gropings after something—it knows not what. Whatever progress has been achieved has been mainly consequential, rather than intentional. It has often been gained in spite of its originators. Few have been the men of vision who could see ten years ahead. And after all, could one reasonably expect it? The necessity of providing for his creature needs has left man little time for looking far ahead. The future was thus early the happy hunting ground of the prophet and seer. One could not expect primitive man, for instance, to have foreseen all the consequences of the discovery of fire. This, perhaps the most momentous of man's discoveries, at once differentiated him from the brutes and made civilisation possible. Think of the thousands of things, for the production of which we depend upon fire, and you must agree that human society is almost inconceivable without it. And yet there must have been some sort of human society which knew it not: Is it to be wondered at that for centuries fire was an object of worship? That man ascribed his knowledge of it to the direct interposition of the Gods! Without going into the question of its probable origin, one which must always remain obscure, we can readily agree that primitive man could have had no conception whatever of its consequences.

Similarly, with the other great discoveries of mankind; the domestication of animals; smelting of metals; steam; gunpowder; electricity; optics; few or none could see their ultimate effect upon human society. Yet how profound has been each one. Each, doubtless even the earliest, has been met with derision, scoffing and prejudiced opposition. But they have conquered, and the ideas and institutions of mankind have been re-moulded. Many of us remember the hoots and boos that greeted the early riders of the bicycle; the guffaws that welcomed the first pneumatic tyres; the sniggers that assailed the first motor-cars; the sneers and newspaper cartoons that accompanied the

first aviators. But they have arrived—they have "made good."

These have been material things. Things that could be handled, felt, seen, experienced. Why, then, this antipathy to anything new? Why this antagonism to anything out of the ordinary? Precisely for that reason. Because it is out of the ordinary.

Man is a lazy animal, a slave of habit and convention. Anything that shakes his complacency or interferes with his established habits is at first distasteful. He is also a curious, inquisitive animal, a trait he shares with his simian cousins. His curiosity often conquers his inertia. Fortunately human society is leavened with a sprinkling of individuals whose curiosity is insatiable, whose thirst for the eternal "why" is unquenchable. Who are not satisfied with the humdrum, the conventional and the superficial? These are they who make their neighbours uncomfortable. Who shake their complacency, and their tendency to take everything for granted, eternal and unalterable. That is why they are at first not popular. One of the results of universal education has been to increase the number of these enquiring souls, and the printing press has developed the means of meeting their needs (one reason why you should push *The Socialist Standard*). Neither of these results were foreseen by either those who inaugurated universal education, or the inventors of printing. Similarly with the discovery of steam and its application to industry. None could see that its outcome would be the world of to-day. That is what we meant when we said earlier "progress has been consequential, rather than intentional." Mankind has got on with the job that was nearest and left the future to look after itself. That is why the world is very far from ideal. That is why current history is a groaning, rumbling, creaking progression, punctuated by catastrophes.

Most people's view of the next ten years is that things will be much the same then as now. "Perhaps the foreman will die, and I shall get his job" sums up the philosophy of a great many. Poor simple souls. Death takes "hands" as well as foremen, and what are you going to do with your life? Life is the thing that matters. How are you spending it? Poor? Of course!



Unemployed? No! And still poor? Yes! damned poor. Then what's wrong? This is where those enquiring, inquisitive people come in. This is where the Socialist gives evidence. Why with all those great powers and discoveries at mankind's disposal should there be any who are poor and unhappy? Why with all the evidence of stupendous wealth around us, should there be any who suffer want, hunger and privation? Yet there are millions! Surely something is wrong!

Yes! What is wrong is the basis upon which society is built. All the means whereby we all live are in private hands. The rule of society is "everyone for himself, and we'll take charge of the Army." The reason they take charge of the Army (and the other Forces, of course) is in case the workers get tired of being hired to make wealth, and desire to enjoy what they alone make. Now Socialism means just that step, that the workers should take possession of all the machinery by means of which wealth is produced and distributed, and use it for the benefit of the whole of society. There is enough and to spare for everyone to lead a full, healthy and happy life. Poverty and all that flows from poverty will be abolished. The good things that workers now produce for others will be their own. The spectacle of useful, industrious citizens starving, or leading cramped, adulterated lives in the midst of plenty will be a thing of the past, a thing unbelievable to future generations.

The effort to bring this about will be met by force. The armed forces we have mentioned will be ruthlessly used against you. But the organised workers hold the master key. By first obtaining control of the political machine they will control the armed forces. With these under control, they can proceed to the re-organisation of society upon a workers' basis, where to those who need will go the fruits of their industry.

Let us, therefore, look ahead. Let us raise ourselves a moment above the daily round, and realise that a life worth living is within our grasp. Let us realise that Socialism is not a vague abstraction, not a dream of some arm-chair philosopher, but a practical, simple re-ordering of human affairs. That is why we said at the commencement of this article that Socialism is

the greatest idea that the human mind has ever conceived. That man, after harnessing the great forces of nature, and opening the treasure chest of Mother Earth should now organise himself, organise human society, that is the "dream." Is it so visionary; is it so impracticable? Help us to realise it. Look ahead.

W.T.H.

### THE RELIEF OF ABSTINENCE.

The latest returns of the tea-producing companies illustrate the enormous amount of unpaid labour that is appropriated by the Capitalist.

The following table shows the dividends of five companies for 1922 and 1923:—

	1922	1923
Alliance Tea of Ceylon	25%	40%
Ederapolia Tea Co. ...	17½%	30%
Nedem Tea Co. ...	22½%	35%
Halem Tea Co. ...	25%	40%
Spring Valley Ceylon ...	35%	50%

(Taken from the *Observer*, 11/5/24).

From the above it will be seen that the shareholders have received on the average over two-thirds of the money back that they invested, and yet they may still have their original amount invested in the company—and this has been accomplished within two years!

Thirty-two pounds a year (out of every hundred originally invested) for doing nothing—not a bad way of obtaining a living. And yet when the engineers, the coal miners, or the railwaymen, ask for a paltry shilling or two more a week for 47 hours or so of arduous work under unhealthy conditions, this is the type of people who cannot find epithets strong enough to condemn such action.

The shareholder invests money in a company (or a paid official does it for him) and then he can go to sleep or go to Jericho with the pleasant conviction that at the end of a given period a nice fat sum will come to him, and at the end of further periods further fat sums will be forthcoming. The idea is spread about that these nice fat sums are the reward of "abstinence." This suggestion would be quite alright if "abstinence" was intended to mean abstaining from useful work. But such is not the intention though it is a fact. We are required to believe that these people abstain from spending the money on pleasures in order to invest it. Yet curi-

ously enough it is at pleasure resorts of various kinds that the wealthy shareholders are found. Who is it occupies the first-class berths on ocean going liners? The abstainer. Who harries the big game in the mighty forests and jungles of Africa and India? The abstainer. Who dodges the harshness of the English winter by taking the first-class trans-Continental express for the Riviera? The abstainer. Who puts as many miles as possible between himself and the ugly factory towns in which his wealth is produced? Why the poor hardly used abstainer, of course.

But everything has an end, even though the end be but the beginning of something else. One day the selfish worker will take pity on the altruistic shareholder and will save the latter from the "miseries" associated with "abstinence." The workers will take unto themselves the fruits of industry to set off against the toils. That day the shareholder will be relieved of his idleness as well as his abstinence. For that he should bless us, but, alas, I fear he will curse us. Our motives are the best and we wish to make of him a happy, healthy, and useful human being.

GILMAC.

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### A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

In our previous article in the May issue we pointed out that the Materialist conception of history regards the development of the means and methods of wealth production and distribution as the motive force and main cause of the changes in the forms of society. We said that this view of historical development had been subjected to a considerable amount of misrepresentation, and we promised to show that Marx and Engels did not, as is alleged by some of their opponents, fail to realise the importance of other factors in history besides the economic one. However, before proceeding to do this, let us look a little closer at our theory of history. In contrast with the old method of treating history, which emphasised the doings and mis-doings of kings and queens, and those of the so-called great men, as the most important of historical happenings, the more up-to-date method, the scientific method, of treating history, has for its theme not only the activities of mankind in general, but also the conditions under which men have lived at different stages of social development. The application of the principle of evolution is, generally speaking, no longer confined exclusively to what is called the purely natural world, but is likewise applied to human history. "For," says Engels, "we live not only in nature, but in human society, and this has its theory of development and its science no less than nature."

As with natural history, which shows us that the struggle for the food supply is the fundamental principle of organic evolution, so with human history is the quest for food, clothing and shelter, together with the development of the means employed to produce these, the fundamental principle in the historical development of human society. In the quest for food, clothing and shelter, human beings do not live in a state of isolation from each other. They belong to the social animals, and since the conditions of their existence cannot be met in isolation, they are compelled to enter into relations with each other in order to live. In other words, the primary factor which holds human-beings together in society is the need for satisfying their economic re-



quirements. Now how does man satisfy his economic requirements? The means of subsistence do not fall from heaven; they have to be produced from surrounding nature by human effort, and this brings us to the question of the means employed by man to produce the wherewithal to live.

Benjamin Franklin has aptly defined man as a tool-making animal. The fact that man can make tools is one of the main distinctions between himself and the lower animals from which he is descended. Not as a tool user is man to be distinguished from his pre-human ancestors, for many of these use tools such as sticks, as weapons of defence, and stones for cracking nuts. Man alone among those who compose the animal kingdom is capable of making tools at will. Whilst the lower animals have to depend upon their own bodily organs, and such tools as are found ready to hand in nature, they are unable to rise above the limits set by nature. But with man the position is entirely different, for inasmuch as he produces tools he supplements his bodily organs and by the use of these tools is able to overcome the obstacles, and to a large extent rise above the limits set by his physical or natural surroundings. In other words, whilst the lower animals adapt themselves to their environment, man as a tool-making animal is able to adapt the environment to himself.

To the extent that man produces and develops the tools which he uses to obtain the means of subsistence, he develops for himself a new set of conditions to which in turn he adapts himself in order to live. To illustrate what is meant by this, let us take an example from man's existence during the period of savagery. In the very earliest stage of human existence, when man's home was in the tropical or sub-tropical forests, the tools used by man to obtain the means of subsistence were not above those used by some of the lower animals. Part of the time of our primitive ancestors of this period was spent in trees, as only in this way could they "escape the attacks of large beasts of prey and survive." Fruit, nuts and roots were the main means of subsistence, and in such conditions as prevailed at this stage of human existence we can well say that man was at the mercy of his natural surroundings. But, when, at a later period of human development, man had discovered the use of fire and had

acquired the ability to make it at will, an entirely new set of conditions were set up as a consequence. Our primitive ancestors were able, as a consequence of the use of fire, to leave the forests, add fish, which only becomes palatable by means of cooking, to their food supply, and by following the courses of rivers, and the shores of seas and lakes, they spread more generally over the greater part of the earth with less regard for climate and locality. Concerning these migrations of early man through his discovery of the use of fire, Morgan points out:—

"Of the fact of these migrations there is abundant evidence in the remains of flint and stone implements of the Status of Savagery found upon all the continents. In reliance upon fruits and spontaneous subsistence a removal from the original habitat would have been impossible." (Ancient Society, page 21.)

At a much later period, when man had invented the bow and arrow we find fresh conditions of existence obtaining largely as a result of this invention. The hunting of big game to serve as means of subsistence, which hitherto had brought forth only scanty results, since man's only tools or weapons in the hunt were the crude club and spear, was, as a consequence of the use of the bow and arrow, taken up as a normal occupation, and meat was added more regularly to the food supply.

As Morgan says concerning the invention of the bow and arrow:—

"This remarkable invention, which came in after the spear war club, and gave the first deadly weapon for the hunt, appeared late in savagery. It has been used to mark the commencement of its Upper Status. It must have given a powerful upward influence to ancient society, standing in the same relation to the period of savagery, as the iron sword to the period of Barbarism, and the fire-arms to the period of civilisation."— (Ancient Society, page 22.)

The invention of the bow and arrow, like the discovery of the use of fire led more or less directly to many remarkable changes in the conditions of human existence. But of these changes more will be said later. Here our chief concern is to stress the importance of the development of tools as the propelling force in social change. The word tools, it must be noted, is used by us in the wider sense to include all the means which are used in general by man to produce and distribute wealth. The telegraph, and the telephone, the giant machines of the cotton mill and the vast ocean liner used to carry

wealth to all parts of the earth, are, from this point of view, just as much tools to our mode of living to-day, as the club and spear, and the bow and arrow were to the mode of living of our savage ancestors. With the progress of time the tools of wealth production and distribution develop so rapidly and become so varied and complex that we are apt to lose sight of them as being tools. Nevertheless, as said above, all the means of wealth production are tools in the wide sense of the term.

Now it is this development of tools which Marx and Engels saw to be the main cause of social change, but they did not stupidly imagine that this development took place apart from man's conscious activity. On the contrary, they fully realised that man spurred on by economic necessity, that is, the necessity for gaining a greater economic security, played an active part in the process. But not an active part independently of time and conditions, but as determined by conditions at particular stages of social development. Whilst realising the overwhelming influence of material conditions in shaping human thought and conduct, Marx and Engels also realised the importance of man's reaction on his environment.

The materialist conception of history as formulated by them cannot logically be said to imply an economic fatalism which would place man at the mercy of economic forces much in the same manner as a billiard ball is at the mercy of rival billiard players.

Now let us turn to the works of Marx and Engels for proof of what has been said.

In his work, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Buonaparte," Marx, in dealing with a series of events in French history leading to the rise to power of Napoleon the Third, says:—

"Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth, he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself, but out of conditions such as he finds close at hand."

This passage, rightly interpreted, leaves no room for the charge of fatalism.

In the first volume of Capital, when dealing with "the Labour process," Marx, stressing the importance of man's reaction upon his environment, says:—

"Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and nature participate, and which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between himself and nature. He opposes himself to nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms

and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his sway. We are not now dealing with those primitive instinctive forms of labour that remind us of the mere animal. An immeasurable interval of time separates the state of things in which a man brings his labour-power to market for sale as a commodity, from that stage in which human labour was still in its first instinctive stage. We presuppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his *modus operandi*, and to which he must subordinate his will."— (Page 157.)

R. REYNOLDS.

(To be continued.)

"With the seizing of the means of production by Society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in Social production is replaced by systematic, definite organisation. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time, man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environs man now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of Nature, because he has now become master of his own Social organisation. . . . It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom."

FREDERICK ENGELS.

## PORTSMOUTH.

Persons interested in the formation of a Branch of the Party in the above neighbourhood should communicate with—

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**The Socialist Standard,**

JUNE,



1924

**COAL INQUIRY ADMISSIONS.**

During the Coal Inquiry Mr. Evan Williams, chairman of the Mining Association, has made certain admissions that disposes of the miners' "Big Wages" myth. He stated that 60,000 earn from 45s. to 50s. a week, 56,000 from 60s. to 65s., and about 12,000 from £5 to £5 5s. The Chairman of the Court of Inquiry drew attention to figures showing that in North Wales 72 per cent. of the men working full time earn less than 55s. a week. (*Daily News*, 30/4/24.)

While we are by no means prepared to accept figures as high as these yet, as they stand, they knock the bottom out of the claim, so often put forward, that miners earn fabulous wages.

Is it a matter for wonder that men who risk their lives daily in a miserable and toilsome occupation for such a beggarly return should now and again become restive and revolt against the conditions of their existence? It would be a matter of wonder if they did not. It would be worse. It would be a matter for despair, for they would have sunk to such a level as to be beyond the hope of salvation.

Mr. Williams made a further admission. We have often heard of the overpowering kindness, thoughtfulness and humanity,

that occasionally moves our masters to keep industries going at a loss in order to provide their ungrateful slaves with employment. How often chairmen of companies, in their reports, have weaved romances around this special kind of benevolence. But Mr. Williams presents the matter in a different light which converts the benevolence into a necessary consideration of £ s. d.

"He declared that it took a great deal of money to close a colliery, and that up to a certain point it was less costly to work at a loss than to shut down. It might even be cheaper to continue working at a loss of as much as 2s. 6d. or 3s. a ton in the hope that there might be revival of prosperity later.

"He referred in this connection to the owners' commitments in relation to coal leases, and to other obligations which placed serious financial obstacles in the way of suspending operations. He mentioned specifically the whole district of North Wales, where, he said, the collieries were kept going because the owners could not afford to shut down."—*Daily News*, April 30, 1924.

You see the motive changes with the case to be proved. Mr. Williams was endeavouring to prove that the mines do not pay well enough to meet the mine workers' demands and hence he had to admit that benevolence was not the motive preventing the closing down of concerns that he alleged did not pay.

The coal companies made huge profits during the War and placed huge amounts to reserve. Their capitals were enormously increased by the issue of bonus shares without the payment of a penny piece on the part of the shareholders, and the price of shares went up tremendously. Bearing this in mind, examine the dividend results over a reasonable period, the enhanced prices of shares, the amounts put to reserve; note the constant formation of new companies (Mr. Williams would have us believe that they were floated to work at a loss!) and the gloom will disappear from Mr. Williams' statements, leaving a much more rosy interpretation than he would have us make.

Readers who find it difficult or impossible to obtain the SOCIALIST STANDARD through the usual channels should communicate with the Head Office, 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1, when regular delivery will be arranged.

**THE STATE.**

The popular view of Socialism is a bundle of misconceptions. One of the most common is that Socialism means nothing more than the control of everything and everybody by the State, swollen to huge dimensions and constituting in effect a distinct official class in opposition to the bulk of the people. Yet nothing is more certain than that the State, throughout its history, has been the weapon of the property-owning class (the means by which it has protected and upheld its property) and with the accomplishment of the social revolution and the disappearance of such a class, the State also will disappear.

What is the State? Those who talk most glibly about it seldom offer evidence of possessing a clear idea of its nature. They usually express themselves in vague idealistic language which serves to hide either their ignorance or their real meaning.

In brief, the State is that central body which by coercion induces the rest of society either to do things which they have no desire to do or to refrain from acts which are dictated by their desires. It is thus the element of organised force operating on a comprehensive scale which forms the essential feature of the State.

The actual organisation of the State has varied with the changes in the social order, but that feature has remained unchanged. The first form of private (as distinct from common) property was the chattel form. Domestic animals, women and children, and finally enslaved debtors and captives became chattels in turn and the State developed in the first place in order to preserve the chattel relationship. The ancient empires, centred in the city-states (such as Rome, Athens and Babylon) were gigantic chattel procuring and tribute levying machines. In these States the free-men (*i.e.*, the non-chattels) were alone citizens, privileged to bear arms and control political affairs. They used their control to hold their chattels in subjection and to protect them from others who might covet and struggle for these principal sources of wealth.

The break up of these ancient empires was followed by the rise of feudalism, a system based on serfdom. The serfs were legally bound to the soil. The landholder was also the lord of the serfs and exploited their labour power accordingly. The land-

holders as a class formed a hierarchy with the King at its head. Here we find another form of State, which, in turn, gave way to yet another form, as a new property-owning ruling-class rose to power.

The modern parasites, the Capitalist class (developed from the merchants, etc., of the cities), have brought the State to its present form. They acquired concessions from the monarch by means of their peculiar weapon, money, and finally curbed his authority along with the downfall of the feudal aristocrats by forcible revolution. In the place of the feudal State we now find representative bodies controlling affairs such as municipal councils and Parliament. The ruling classes of the ancient and medieval worlds ruled by their own right arms; the modern tyrants introduced the standing army as the mainstay of their sway. The military organisations of their predecessors gave way to the political parties of the Parliamentary arena, while the actual administration of the law was handed over to an ever-increasing professional bureaucracy.

The development of modern industry has brought to the front a new political element, *i.e.*, the proletariat, the propertyless working class. For the first time in history the slaves are enfranchised and are openly recognised by their rulers to be the most important factor in the State. Only gradually, however, are they coming to realise the fact themselves.

The modern State, therefore, is a contradiction. It consists of a repressive machine supported by the very class which is repressed. It exists to protect private property in the means of life against the actual producers of those means. It is the political expression of the antagonism of economic interests in society.

Whence then arises the illusion that Socialism, a system of society involving a community of interests, will develop the State to a still greater extent? Partly, no doubt, from the confusing and ignorant propaganda of the so-called Socialist elements in the Labour Party; but partly also from the fact that Socialism can only be established by means of the State *in the hands of the working class*. Where those who are afraid of bureaucracy make their mistake is in forgetting the phrase in italics.

Socialism cannot be established by the Capitalists. It cannot be established by the



State as it exists at present. Only when **the workers, organised consciously and politically**, capture the State and convert it into the agent of emancipation will it be possible to convert the means of life (*i.e.*, the land, factories, railways, etc.) into the common property of the whole people.

This revolution within the State, necessary as it is for the social revolution, so far from extending the bureaucracy will abolish it. The first act of the revolutionary administration will be to take direct control and responsibility from the hands of the officials in every department. The working class must itself become the State. As the revolution proceeds and the Capitalist class are stripped of their *economic* privileges, so the workers' organisation will cease to be political and will become economic. It will be concerned, not with government of persons, but with the administration of the social means of production and distribution. Class distinctions having been abolished, class antagonism will disappear and with it the need for a repressive force.

The reader may object, "But what of the law which depends on the State, is that to go, too? How will you preserve order among individuals?" Supporters of Capitalism among the workers seldom realise how much institutions such as "the law" are part of the social system existing at a particular time and are not eternal necessities of nature. "The law" has changed along with the State that made it. The laws of the ancient patricians, the laws of the medieval barons, have followed the customs of prehistoric barbarians; the laws of the last of the exploiting classes will do likewise and there will thus be an end of laws and the beginning of social freedom.

The civil law regulates contracts and implies private property and the production of commodities. When society consciously regulates production and distribution, contracts will become meaningless. The individual will depend for the satisfaction of his economic wants, not upon some other individual or group, but upon society as a whole; consequently, he will have no motive for entering into bargains or seeking the aid of the law to enforce their terms.

Turning to the criminal law, that also will become meaningless in a society of equals. Time was when, in the interests of Capitalism, the idea was spread that there existed a distinct criminal type with marked

physical and psychological characteristics. To-day that idea is discredited even among Capitalist authorities themselves. Crime is the effect of social conditions. Crimes against property such as theft, arson, etc., are directly traceable to economic causes which will disappear along with poverty and the fear of poverty. Crimes against persons are also in the majority of cases bound up with these same economic causes; while even the so-called "crimes of passion" arise largely from the unwholesome conditions, moral as well as physical, which are inevitably engendered by Capitalism.

Socialists do not pretend that violent anti-social acts will entirely cease to occur, but that they will, undoubtedly, dwindle to such proportions as to render the existing legal methods of dealing with offenders obsolete. The concern of society under Socialism will not be repression but the development of a physical environment and mental atmosphere which will allow for the full evolution of the individual and thus secure his voluntary co-operation with his fellows. Comradeship will take the place of coercion and for the first time since the dawn of history the legal State will give way to a moral society.

E. B.

### WE MEAN NO ILL!

Socialism is the name given to a future state of society in which all the people physically and mentally fit will take a part in doing whatever is necessary, according to their capacities, and in return will receive whatever they require that is within the power of Society to provide, with due regard to the needs of each. The more important of such things are food, clothing and shelter.

We only require the best food and in sufficient quantity to keep us satisfied and healthy; it is not essential that we should have an endless gorge. We only require the best of clothing and in sufficient quantity for comfort and adornment; it is not essential that we should make ourselves into clothes horses. We only require sufficient housing accommodation to enable us to live comfortably and free from foul smells and unsightliness; we do not require an endless number of rooms to get lost in.

There are people so satiated with food

that eating has become a bore; we would relieve them of their boredom. There are others who are in an eternal sweat changing from one suit of clothes into another; we would ease their toil. There are others again doomed to occupy vast mansions of numberless rooms; we would relieve them of their solitude.

There are people again, and these are the great majority, who know not the meaning of a stomach regularly filled with the best of food, clothing in sufficiency and patchless, houses comfortable and sanitary; we would see them lifted out of their misery and placed in the midst of comfort and security.

We would convert the lives of one class from the endless hurry after pleasures that do not satisfy to the leisurely pursuit of useful work that elevates and is a pleasure in itself. We would convert the lives of the other class from toilsome work in occupations they detest, that does not always guarantee them even a bare existence, into work the performance of which will fill them with joy and leave them to end their days in tranquility.

Why then does the one class view our friendly offers with hatred whilst the other views them with suspicion and apathy? Heigho! This is a funny old world!

GILMAC.

**NOW ON SALE.**

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FROM THE

S.P.G.B., 17 Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1

### FASCISM AND OTHER THINGS.

*The Editor,*

"SOCIALIST STANDARD."

Dear Comrade,

Whilst I cannot claim to be a new reader of your periodical, *The Socialist Standard*, I generally peruse it from the front page to the back page in the hope of gleaningsome information or enlightenment on current economic problems. Therefore, I read with some trepidation the article by one styled "Gilmac" in your April issue entitled "To a New Reader." After giving a short discourse on the present-day position of the worker, and informing him, indisputably, that "wealth is produced by means of privately-owned means of production" etc., etc., etc., he proceeds, "to emulate the prophets (?) and to indulge in a little idle surmise," as he so aptly puts it. Having assumed that we have elected the requisite number of delegates to Parliament, we then proceed on three main lines of investigation.

1. Ascertain the needs of the population. (A matter of compiling statistics.)
2. The means available to satisfy these needs. (A matter of compiling statistics.)
3. The labour required to do the necessary work. (A matter of compiling statistics.)

In fact, all that we have to do is to "sit tight" and compile statistics, a relatively simple matter, as he states (although he does not say what it is relevant to).

It appears to me that our comrade has, to use an aphorism, started to build the roof of his house before he has laid its foundations.

Firstly, by what means does he propose to get the necessary delegates (*Socialist*) into Parliament?

Tentatively, I will answer this question by stating, presumably by education on lines laid down by the S.P.G.B.

Then what will happen when this educational policy becomes a serious menace to the Capitalist class: which means its ultimate extinction? Naturally that section of the community will immediately protect itself to its utmost resources, employing the whole forces of the Capitalist State to this end. The Facisti will come out of its lair with an abundance of cans of castor oil and other relics of the Inquisition, and the



S.P.G.B. will be driven underground. Far be it from me to cast cold water upon the rosy prospect of endless statistics which our comrade pictures in his endeavour to emulate the prophets, but if I were a new reader I could not derive much inspiration or information from his article.

May I prevail upon you, Comrade Editor, to enlarge upon this fundamental and vital matter of policy, without being referred to the issue of the "Standard" for the year 1849? Yours fraternally,

W. R. SAUNDERS.

### REPLY.

The Editorial Committee has passed your letter on to me for reply.

Really, friend, I must protest. You certainly did not peruse the article in question from the first line to the last with thoroughness. Had you done so you would not have aimed such criticism at it. You will, I am sure, forgive me for pointing out that before the foundations of a house are laid the architect must consider the nature of the roof. I was showing that the roof would be quite alright. I did not pretend to deal with the method of overthrowing capitalism. My object was simply to show that the evils existing were evils of Capitalism, and that once the workers were in a position to establish Socialism the method of procedure would be comparatively simple.

I will not refer you to the "Standard" for the year 1849 (you have doubtless read numerous articles in previous issues dealing fully and completely with "this fundamental and vital matter of policy") but I will refer you to the article criticised. In it you will notice that I point out how simple it will be to so arrange production and distribution as to satisfy the needs of the population. Now you say this conveys nothing to you. If you are an old reader of the "Standard" then the points mentioned are well known to you and, therefore, perhaps of no immediate interest. But you must not forget that the article was addressed to a new reader, and he, presumably, knows nothing of Socialism. He cannot conceive of production and distribution being carried on without capital, trading, taxation, wages boards and the like. The new viewpoint put before such a reader may lead him to see that there are other ways of producing and distributing wealth than

the present way, and may, therefore, convey much to him. After all, the constant argument of the average worker is "You cannot do without the Capitalist." "Who is to pay our wages?" You see, the average worker is concerned a good deal with the "roof." I set out to show him that the roof would be quite sound.

And now you will pardon me again for reminding you that whatever methods you consider will have to be adopted to overthrow Capitalism, you will still have to carry out the aforesaid investigations on the morrow of the Revolution, i.e.,

1. Ascertain the needs of the population.
2. The means available to satisfy those needs.
3. The labour required to do the necessary work.

It is no good, you cannot escape the statistics friend. The Russian Bolsheviks learnt to their cost the tremendous importance of statistics in their reorganisation.

It is so simple friend, isn't it? Yet it is "information" to many people, if not to you.

Now for the questions you ask, neither of which were dealt with in the article as they were outside the particular subject.

You wish to know how we propose getting the necessary Socialist delegates into Parliament? Briefly stated, we propose doing so by convincing a majority of the working class electorate of the slave position they occupy to-day; that their interests and the interests of their masters are opposed and cannot be reconciled; that their only hope of obtaining permanent improvement in their condition is by establishing Socialism; that in order to establish Socialism they must take the State power out of the hands of the Capitalists, and the only way they can do that is by sending a majority of delegates to the seat of power (Parliament) with instructions to take from the Capitalists this power that they wield; once having obtained control of the State power it will then be necessary to set about establishing Socialism.

Now for your second point—and, by the way, it is a prophecy! You assert that "the Facisti will come out of its lair." Would it not have been better to have examined the conditions out of which the Facisti arose, and see if similar conditions were likely to exist in England?

Before dealing with the Facisti, I will make a few preliminary remarks.

When the Socialist Party has grown sufficiently to become a serious menace to the Capitalists and inspires the latter with alarm, they will undoubtedly use all available methods to extinguish Socialist propaganda and hinder the development of the Party. But there are certain limitations to the methods that can be employed. Methods that would bring chaos into the system will be avoided, as the Capitalists themselves would go down in the ruin. They dare not make any serious permanent alteration in the method of carrying on the system, with the object of hindering the worker from giving expression to his wishes. The main social functions are not carried out by Capitalists, but by officials elected to various bodies; among which are the Parliamentary, County and Local Bodies. An important interference with the method of appointing officials to such bodies, operating for any considerable length of time, would put the system out of gear and the Capitalists out of their present position. Anarchy will not suit the Capitalists. This fact is forcing Mussolini to modify his methods now he is in power.

Italy is a comparatively young nation and the nationalist spirit is still strong there. After the War, work in the industries that had catered for war fell off and, as in other countries, unemployment suddenly grew to tremendous proportions. The organisation of the large corporations had improved; waste was cut down to an extent never attained before; machinery and mass production methods had undergone a hot-house development; and these corporations had obtained such a firm control over industry that many of the smaller fry had been ruined and thrown into the ranks of the working class though still retaining a vivid recollection of and hankering after their former privileged position.

Immediately after the War, the workers flocked into the trade unions under the influence of the war-time promises of the Capitalists and the peace-time promises of the "men-of-action." But they were very soon disillusioned of their hopes. The industrial movement that culminated in the occupation of the factories had a disastrous ending, and the "land for the peasants movement" collapsed.

The Facisti, at first a small and insignificant group, promised the Italian workers a classless state, a state above parties, which

would consolidate Italy's war gains. It further promised a new electoral law, equal suffrage for women, the eight-hour day, progressive income-tax, and demanded an enquiry into war profits. It also organised a trade union with the object of harmonising the interests of employers and employed.

This policy attracted to its support employers, disbanded soldiers still suffering from patriotic fever and lack of employment, ex-officers, disappointed town workers of all kinds, peasants, and ruined small masters who thought they saw in the new movement a chance of re-establishment. The growth of the Facisti was assisted by the compromising and barren policy of the Italian parties that laid claim to the intellectual leadership of the workers, and by the clandestine assistance of the Government. In the main, the movement represented, as far as the workers were concerned, a clutching at straws. Intimidation of workers, of course, was resorted to, but the support obtained by this means was small compared with that freely given.

There were other important factors in the situation, but space will not permit me going further into the matter.

The Facisti movement then, was composed of a mixture of opposing elements, and it flourished by Governmental favour. Since success has come to it the internal opposition is becoming more and more insistent in spite of the recent victory at the polls. It is made up mainly of workers and it has been unable to fulfil the promises made to its poorer adherents.

In due course Fascism will break down of its own weight and the class antagonism between master and worker, employer and employed, will become more clearly demonstrated than ever. Even the military force it has organised contains the seeds of collapse, and will soon prove a broken reed in the day of trial. Fascism, therefore, far from stopping the growth of Socialism, is only a momentary halt—like the Communist movement—before a leap forward. Mussolini has been compelled by conditions to modify more and more his dictatorship, and though he may for a time interfere with electoral methods, conditions will force him to allow more opportunity for the carrying out of the wishes of the mass of the population or pay the penalty—involve himself, and the class he represents, in ruin.



Now for your question as to what the Socialist Party would do *if* the Facisti comes "out of its lair," etc., etc. The Socialist Party would do the same as it did during the War, assuming its support were comparatively small—put the Socialist position at every reasonable opportunity, and wait for the inevitable receding of the wave. *No working-class party could do more.*

But be very careful to note the "if." Conditions in England are not so favourable to the growth of Fascism as they are abroad. And further by the time the Socialist Party had become sufficiently strong to menace the Capitalists' position and move them to the action you suggest there would be a very strong body of class-conscious workers in this country who would have no reason for disillusionment, and a still larger mass of workers who would be nearing the Socialist position—conditions which were not present in Italy. At such a time then the development of Fascism in England would be very unlikely.

GILMAC.

### MARX ON FREE TRADE.

(Continued from May "S.S.")

And do not believe, gentlemen, that it is a matter of indifference to the working man whether he receives only four francs on account of corn being cheaper, when he had been receiving five francs before.

Have not his wages always fallen in comparison with profit? And is it not clear that his social position has grown worse as compared with that of the capitalist? Beside which he loses actually. So long as the price of corn was higher and wages were also higher, a small saving in the consumption of bread sufficed to procure him other enjoyments. But as soon as bread is cheap, and wages are therefore low, he can save almost nothing on bread for the purchase of other articles.

The English working men have shown the English Free Traders that they are not the dupes of their illusions or of their lies; and if, in spite of this, the workers have made common cause with the manufacturers against the landlords, it is for the purpose of destroying the last remnant of feudalism, that henceforth they may have only one

enemy to deal with. The workers have not miscalculated, for the landlords, in order to revenge themselves upon the manufacturers, have made common cause with the workers to carry the Ten Hours Bill, which the latter had been vainly demanding for thirty years, and which was passed immediately after the repeal of the Corn Laws.

When Dr. Bowring, at the Congress of Economists, drew from his pocket a long list to show how many head of cattle, how much ham, bacon, poultry, &c., is imported into England, to be consumed—as he asserted—by the workers, he unfortunately forgot to state that at the same time the workers of Manchester and other factory towns were thrown out of work by the beginning of the crisis.

As a matter of principle in political economy, the figures of a single year must never be taken as the basis for formulating general laws. We must always take the average of from six to seven years, a period during which modern industry passes through the successive phases of prosperity, over-production, crisis, thus completing the inevitable cycle.

Doubtless, if the price of all commodities falls—and this is the necessary consequence of Free Trade—I can buy far more for a franc than before. And the working man's franc is as good as any other man's. Therefore Free Trade must be advantageous to the working man. There is only one little difficulty in this, namely that the workman, before he exchanges his franc for other commodities, has first to exchange his labour for the money of the capitalist. If in this exchange he always received the said franc while the price of all other commodities fell, he would always be the gainer by such a bargain. The difficulty does not lie in proving that the price of all commodities falling, more commodities can be bought for the same sum of money.

Economists always take the price of labour at the moment of its exchange with other commodities, and altogether ignore the moment at which Labour accomplishes its own exchange with capital. When it costs less to set in motion the machinery which produces commodities then the things necessary for the maintenance of this machine, called workman, will also cost less. If all commodities are cheaper, labour, which is a commodity too, will also fall in

price, and we shall see later that this commodity, labour, will fall far lower in proportion than all other commodities. If the working man still pins his faith to the arguments of the economists, he will find, one fine morning, that the franc has dwindled in his pocket, and that he has only five sous left.

Thereupon the economists will tell you:—

"We admit that competition among the workers will certainly not be lessened under Free Trade, and will very soon bring wages into harmony with the low price of commodities. But, on the other hand, the low price of commodities will increase consumption, the larger consumption will increase production, which will in turn necessitate a larger demand for labour, and this larger demand will be followed by a rise in wages."

"The whole argument amounts to this: Free Trade increases productive forces. When manufactures keep advancing, when wealth, when the productive forces, when, in a word, productive capital increases, the demand for labour, the price of labour, and consequently the rate of wages, rises also."

The most favourable condition for the working man is the growth of capital. This must be admitted; when capital remains stationary commerce and manufacture are not merely stationary but decline, and in this case the workman is the first victim. He will suffer before the capitalist. And in the case of the growth of capital, under the circumstances, which, as we have said, are the best for the working man, what will be his lot? He will suffer just the same. The growth of capital implies the accumulation and the concentration of capital. This centralisation involves a greater division of labour and a greater use of machinery. The greater division of labour destroys the especial skill of the labourer; and by putting in the place of this skilled work labour which anyone can perform it increases competition among the workers.

This competition becomes more fierce as the division of labour enables a single man to do the work of three. Machinery accomplishes the same result on a much larger scale. The accumulation of productive capital forces the industrial capitalist to work with constantly increasing means of production, ruins the small manufacturer, and throws him into the ranks of the proletariat. Then, the rate of interest falling in proportion as capital accumulates, the people of small means and retired tradespeople, who can no longer live upon their small incomes, will be forced to look out for some business again and ultimately to swell the number of

proletarians. Finally, the more productive capital grows, the more it is compelled to produce for a market whose requirements it does not know—the more supply tries to force demand, and consequently crises increase in frequency and in intensity. But every crisis in turn hastens the concentration of capital, adds to the proletariat. Thus, as productive capital grows, competition among the workers grows too, and grows in a far greater proportion. The reward of labour is less, for all, and the burden of labour is increased for at least some of them.

(To be continued.)

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"Anarchism and Socialism" (Plechanoff), price 3/6 (paper 1/2).

"Civil War in France" (Marx), price 2/9.

"Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844" (Engels), price 5/-.

"Critique of Political Economy" (Marx), price 6/6.

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"Social and Philosophical Studies" (Lafargue), price 3/6.

"Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" (Engels), price 3/6 (Limp. 1/6).

Postage extra.

"Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know what he doth not."

FRANCIS BACON.



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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 239. Vol. 20.]

LONDON, JULY, 1924.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE REVOLUTION IN HOME LIFE.

The assertion that Socialism will destroy the home is a pretty stale one, and, in view of the wholesale disintegration since the war of anything approaching home-life (as one time understood), it is hardly worth treating seriously. Perhaps, however, it may be worth while to review the changes in the domestic sphere that have taken place and still are taking place, since out of the present the future will grow; while the social revolution can leave no phase of social existence untouched.

What is to be the future of the home, family life, the relationship between men and women, parents and children, and so on? These are questions which force themselves on thinking minds, pressing for an answer. On the positive side we cannot be too careful of making rash assertions. The *basis* for the new social life has yet to be established. We are not prophets, but we may usefully reflect on the new elements now developing in society which will burst their bonds.

What are these new elements? The germ of the *social* revolution is the *industrial* revolution; the change from petty handicraft and small manufacture to large scale industry based upon mechanical appliances is the vital force which has come into conflict with established institutions in every sphere of life. In the realm of production itself the machine has welded the workers into huge masses struggling against the dominion of capital. No longer scattered in small villages, hopelessly ignorant and detached from one another, but thrown

together, willy-nilly forced into common thought and action. Politically the concentration of the population in the industrial centres has shifted the balance of power. No longer do the propertied class manipulate the machinery of government without consulting their slaves. At every turn the wealthy minority is dependent upon the political support of the workers. The slaves are enfranchised. While in the field of speculation religion dies a lingering death before the onward march of science, organised knowledge, handmaid of industrial progress. Is the home alone to escape unscathed and unaltered?

What is the home? To-day for the wealthy it may be any one of two or three or more places. A town house, a country seat, a villa by the sea, a mere temporary resting place to be occupied at intervals in the ceaseless round of pleasure-hunting, sport, and what not. For the workers is it ever much more than a den in which the man retires to sleep and eat while the woman wears her fingers to the bone and her nerves to shreds in the vain effort to make ends meet?

The sentimentalist, the moralist, and the religionist all draw us their pictures of what home is, or rather what they think it ought to be. But ask yourself, fellow-worker, is not the picture I have drawn the true one?

Is the picture to remain the true one, fellow-worker? The answer lies with you! The home, like all else, has had its evolution, its growth from primitive origins, and we have not yet reached finality. You,



fellow-slaves, can make it something better than it has ever been.

Consider! In the dim past the hunters wandered from place to place after the wild animals, little better organised than the animals themselves. Men lived in herds. Individuality had yet to be born. Home-life was of a primitive communal character.

From this state emerged by slow stages and revolutions the patriarchal family. The domestication of animals provided the economic groundwork for this form of home-life, and as men accumulated wealth in the form of chattels, so women passed into a similar state of domestic subordination. This arose mainly out of the division of labour adopted, hunting and pastoral pursuits being confined to the men, the women specialising in cooking, cloth-making, etc.

With the advent of slavery and agriculture the position of women underwent still further degradation. Rigid discipline and seclusion of the married women took the place of the comparative freedom of savage custom, and through the whole of history that position of subjection has taken various forms, but not yet has it been fundamentally altered.

The homes of the Roman Patrician, the feudal baron, and the modern bourgeois all contain the essential element, predominance of the male over the female. The ancient world accepted the position for what it was, a form of slavery. The medieval world sentimentalised and romanced about it, consecrated it with holy water and the prayers of Mother Church. The modern world hides its cynicism behind a veil of cant. It disguises its legal and financial motives behind an avowed concern for the highest morality.

For the wage-slave who thinks, however, the march of modern industry tears all veils asunder. He sees how little regard his masters have for morality where profits are concerned, and so he smiles at the superior notions possessed by his Press-doped slaves concerning their relation to their "unpaid-housekeepers."

In spite of the fact that men and women of the working class alike (whether they toil for the boss directly in the factory or not) are all *slaves* of the boss class, one still finds numbers of men who imagine themselves "small employers of labour" because they are married, and women who are prepared to accept that position.

Where the women are themselves openly employed in industry, etc., this attitude becomes hopelessly absurd and gradually yields to the facts. Yet, though not apparent in reality, it is no less absurd even in cases where the woman remains at home. What woman can make ends meet for a family or even for a couple on the average man's wage? How many are forced to "take in lodgers" or dressmaking, or make petty slaves of themselves in one way or another, in order to buy the clothes they need? The economic dependence of woman becomes less and less a dependence on the individual man, and more and more upon society at large.

Time was, in the medieval handicraft period of production, when the home was the centre of industry. The wife and daughters of the peasant and the craftsman carried on numerous occupations for the family use that now form the basis of large-scale industry. The old technical basis of the home has gone, and with it the last justification (in the historical sense) for male dominance and control.

The male worker has now no property to leave to his children. From their earliest years they must go out and be exploited in return for their bread. The old paternal ties are broken. All are equally slaves to the class that owns the means of life.

The social revolution spells the doom of class ownership. It means the world for all the workers, male and female, young and old. In such a world what ties can hold, on what basis can the home rest? Private property in the means of life will be gone, legal authority of individual over individual will have disappeared. Greed and force can no longer operate under such conditions. Is it too much to believe that affection will develop in their place?

The modern powers of production can supply the wants of all. With common ownership and democratic control of those powers the last cause of individual antagonism in the economic sphere will have vanished. The economic sphere is the *basic* sphere. As the roots are, so shall the tree be. Leisure, education, opportunity for self-development, these shall be yours, fellow-workers, when you have shaken off your fetters. To-day your masters can call the world *their* home. Yet your class has made it what it is! Why not call it yours?

E. B.

## LABOUR IN THE UNITED STATES.

### The Army of the Workless.

Glowing stories are current here of the prosperity in America. Work and high wages for all is the tale told by fly-by-night travellers. The facts, however, are quite different. The "boom" which began in 1923 is over, and many leading industries are working on "short" time and with reduced labour. The organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers ("The Advance," June 6, 1924) reports from the great centre of the clothing trade—Chicago—that for every 100 jobs available for the week ending April 5th, 1924, the numbers of workers registered at the Chicago Employment Exchange was 1,587, an increase of 200 over the last week in March.

The huge commercial concern in industrial America, The Stone and Webster Company, writing on conditions in the textile centre of Lawrence, Massachusetts states, in their official "Stone and Webster Journal" for April, that:—

the textile industry is in such a state that thousands of people who depend upon that industry for a livelihood are now out of employment. Many families and persons are now in dire want and the outlook is not encouraging.

They warn the textile workers that they must take lower wages because people have "stopped buying as much in the way of clothes as formerly. Consequently a great unemployment problem was raised at Lawrence." This is in an industry where about the lowest wages are paid in America, and these starvation rates have been obtained after the most bitter and bloody suppression of millworkers' strikes in America's history. Machinery, girl labour and the brutality of the employers have told their tale in Lawrence and the Fall River "she" towns. Starvation wages for a while and long periods of "no wages" makes the life of the worker.

### The Present Depression.

America is no exception to the "laws" of capitalist production. The organ of finance, "The Wall Street Journal," for April, analyses the situation thus:—

The fact is that for several years we have been going along smoothly filling out the post-war demand for sundries such as new housing, railroad equipment, automobiles and many other essentials and non-essentials. That demand has to an appreciable extent been satisfied.

The first point to consider is our manufacturing equipment. On this score there can be no question that in many lines we have too much capacity of production for the demand at hand. Ever since the war it has been a great problem to keep our plants fully and profitably occupied.

It goes on to state that, without a large foreign market, the highly productive industrial resources become an incubus. The article shows that in all the basic industries demand has greatly declined and will decline further. Production has decreased considerably.

In the "Golden West" the same "slump" has taken place. The Bay Counties (San Francisco, etc.) District Council of Carpenters issues a bulletin for May, which states:—

Our unemployment situation, which was large enough throughout the winter, is growing steadily worse. Building operations are being curtailed or postponed, mechanics are being laid off, and are walking the streets with their ranks steadily increasing by the influx of men from other localities looking for work.

This is in the largest shipping and financial centre of California. The same conditions exist in other centres. The motor-car industry centred in Detroit (a city of over a million people) has piled up production so rapidly since the factories re-opened in 1922 that large vacant plots had to be used to store the cars. Rapid production with a non-expanding market has resulted in a large and growing number of men being thrown out of work, with others on short time. Wall Street capital organised in the "General Motors Combine" and Ford's practically control the trade, and when they reduce output there is no chance for work elsewhere.

### "The Land of Opportunity."

"Every man has a chance" is a common joke in the U.S.A. The workers' chance may be gathered from the Report of the Industrial Relations Commission of 1916, which stated that 2 per cent. of the people owned 60 per cent. of the wealth. The control of wealth by the few was made plainer still by this Commission appointed by the Government. Their report states:—

With few exceptions each of the basic industries is dominated by a single large corporation, and where this is not true, the control of the industry through stock ownership in supposedly independent corporations and through credit, is almost, if not quite, as potent.

In such corporations, in spite of the large number of stockholders, the control through actual stock ownership rests with a very small number



of persons. For example, in the United States Steel Corporation, which had in 1911 approximately 100,000 stockholders, 1.5 per cent. of the stockholders held 57 per cent. of the stock, while the final control rested with a single private banking house. Similarly in the American Tobacco Company, before the dissolution, 10 stockholders held 60 per cent. of the stock.

Since 1916, Henry H. Klein, Deputy Commissioner of Accounts of New York City, has written his volume of statistics, called "Dynastic America and Those Who Own It." In this he shows how the industries of the country are owned and controlled by very few. He names 14 families whose wealth is estimated at 100 millions each, and points out in detail how the financial magnates own a controlling share of the stock of the concerns of the country. The same kind of concentration takes place in agriculture. Senator Brookhart stated in the Senate that 400,000 lost their farms in 1923.

#### The Economic Trend.

The result of advancing capitalism in America has been the replacement of competition by monopoly. The great capitals invested have enabled the capitalists to build huge plants with the latest machinery and under the most scientific running of industry. There is no chance for the worker starting for himself in industry. The so-called high wages in America, often quoted here, are in reality "high" only in money terms. Their purchasing power is only sufficient to cover the cost of living in a country where rent takes a large part of the wage. The necessities of life are also proportionately "high." These "high" wages are little when compared to the ever-increasing output of labour, and the high degree of exploitation accounts for the fabulous riches of the employing class. Work there is intensive, and under the Taylor system of shop management, the speed is always increasing. Young men are chiefly required, for the older men are "worked out" very soon. Piecework, with its exhausting effects, is widespread, and as soon as output increases, rates per piece are reduced. The speed of modern production is so great that in a short time the market is glutted with goods. In 1921 there were over 6 millions out of work. In the short period since work started again, modern highly-developed methods have once more overstocked the market, and thus the spectre of unemployment becomes a grim reality. Even

when trade is brisk only a fraction of the working class is required in production, and the others are driven to all kinds of commercial pursuits. In this department, too, the Trusts by their close ownership and control, save wages by reducing the number of men required. "Crime" becomes a resort of large numbers who are pushed out of industry, and crimes against private property have become so numerous that they cease to be fully reported. The labour of women, especially married women, is largely used because of its cheapness, and the use of child labour is another powerful force against the worker. "Prosperity" spells little but hard work for our class in the U.S.A. as elsewhere.

#### The Workers' "Share."

The story that most workers own their own houses and their own motor cars is another study in satire. The terrible overcrowding of trams and trains during rush hours is an answer to the motor-car nonsense, and the fact that most workers live in hired rooms answers the "house-owner's" joke. Even when they do "own" houses they are bought on instalments, and the owner soon seizes his property when "depression" stops the workers' wages. Most workers' houses, too, are wooden shacks of a primitive variety. Considering, too, that the secondhand and even new cars the workers buy on instalments are not much higher in price than bicycles here, it does not mean much to be a car "owner." The expensive limousines and high-priced cars used by the parasites there make the workers' cars look like tin cans. Life in the U.S.A. shows that, wherever capitalism develops further, it makes a greater contrast in the position of the worker and the capitalist.

When an industrial crisis takes place, as in 1921, the secondhand car dealers are flooded with cars which the "lucky" workers have to sell. The charity societies are packed with applicants clamouring for bread, and outside bakers' shops long lines form to get a crust. The ranks of prostitution are swelled, and the great numbers involved in the crisis prevent personal borrowing. As soon as the factories reopen the capitalist cuts wages, knowing the large army of workless waiting for jobs. War is declared on unions and strikes are doomed.

#### "The Socialist Party of America."

The trade unions in the U.S.A. are largely composed of loyal followers of the Republican and Democratic Capitalist Parties. Sheep-like they blindly elect the nominees of the financial interests, and they support the most servile agents of capitalism as their union leaders. The powerful and widely-read capitalist press carefully moulds the workers' minds, and the result is that educational work in the trade unions is carried on under difficulties. Little of this Socialist work is now being attempted, however.

"The Socialist Party of America," formed 24 years ago, has rapidly declined in numbers. Boasting over 100,000 members in 1916, it has to-day not more than 20,000. More than two-thirds of their members were expelled in 1919, and since that date the "Socialist Party" has become so opportunist and reformist that they promoted a Labour Party and joined in conferences of the Committee for Progressive Political Action, whose object is to decide which capitalist politician is most suitable to vote for. Even with all their vote-catching and time-serving methods, their numbers have disappointed them so sadly that quite a number have joined more popular bodies where jobs and notoriety are quicker.

#### The Socialist Labour Party.

The oldest party in U.S.A. claiming to be Socialist is the Socialist Labour Party. Once very active and advancing, it rapidly declined when it promoted Industrial Unionism. The I.W.W. was formed by S.L.P. efforts on the theory that only economic unity can make political unity. The economic organisation, however, caused immediate conflict in the political party. The theory that only an economic body can "take and hold" the means of production which the S.L.P. laid down, resulted in the I.W.W. being anti-political. Wm. Haywood and a majority of the I.W.W. soon repudiated all ideas of political unity, and the S.L.P. minority formed a new I.W.W. which later changed its name to the Workers' International Industrial Union. This body still insisted that economic action alone could make the workers victorious. The result was that the S.L.P. dwindled, until to-day it is a shadow of its former self. The W.I.I.U. refused continually to endorse the political party (the S.L.P.).

The economic organisation of men of all parties and all ideas instead of making for political unity with the S.L.P., caused the S.L.P. members in the union to fraternise with political opponents such as the S.P. of A. The S.L.P. was soon, therefore, driven to expel many of their oldest members, such as Herman Richter, Rudolph Katz, etc. The disbanding of the W.I.I.U., reported elsewhere in this issue, admits all that our party has said in criticism of the S.L.P. But the confusing ideas about the relative value of political and industrial action still exists in the minds of the S.L.P. members, and therefore a correct understanding of the class struggle is still lacking.

#### The Industrial Workers of the World.

The I.W.W. to-day is but a fraction compared to the 100,000 they once claimed. Although supposed to be revolutionary, it has been compelled to enrol any worker, irrespective of his views. Functioning to-day as a trade union, it is organised for the every-day struggle about wages and hours. Their chief cry is organisation. "Organise on the job" they say, for better conditions. Their war-cry of the General Strike has long been absent from their literature and their official organ, "The Industrial Worker" (September 29, 1919) published the following farewell to their General Strike battle-cry:—

It must be apparent to anyone who has given any thought to the matter that a social general strike as the culminating point in the revolution will fail if it ever happens. . . The workers must organise, not so much for a strike, as for carrying on production and distribution, after capitalism has been overthrown. The trouble perhaps with those who formulated the general strike theory, is that they could not free themselves from the dogma that capitalism was to be overthrown by establishing a tremendous picket line around the industries. They rejected craft unionism but couldn't lose its methods.

This was written after large numbers of Haywood's pamphlet on the "General Strike" had been circulated by the I.W.W. This pamphlet has been withdrawn now that they have given up the General Strike idea. Sabotage, which they formerly advocated (see Elizabeth Gurley Flynn's "Sabotage"), they have now publicly repudiated. Their papers and lectures largely consist of appeals for help in defence funds which have become almost an industry in America. Their past reputation for "Smashing the ballot box with an axé" and their spasmodic



strikes have resulted in many prosecutions for "Criminal Syndicalism." The attacks upon the trade union activity of the I.W.W. simply shows the brutality and power of the ruling class in America. The bloody attacks upon American Federation of Labour strikers in West Virginia coalfields and in the steel areas shows that even "respectable" unions are crushed in blood once they resist the employers' attacks on wages. The I.W.W. to-day is confined to limited areas where the American Federation of Labour is weak. The attacks upon them from the outside and the deliberate Communist effort to break it from within have left the organisation but a few thousand members. Nearly all the prominent men from W. Haywood to G. Hardy have gone into politics and secured jobs from the Communists. The Moscow International once declared its admiration and support of the I.W.W., but later decided that "One Big Unions" are to be opposed and workers should go back to the ordinary labour unions. Hence the disruptive tactics of the Communists in the I.W.W.

#### The Communist Party of America.

This party was formed by foreign language federations who were expelled from the Socialist Party of America. Largely of Russian and allied nationality, they soon showed their 100 per cent. Bolshevism by issuing a programme similar to that the Bolsheviks issued under completely different conditions. In a country where the outlook of the workers is conservative and where the elementary work of preaching Socialism remains to be done, the International Secretary of the Communists, Louis Fraina, explained the Communist idea thus:

The Revolution is an act of a minority at first; of the most class conscious section of the industrial proletariat which in a test of electoral strength, would be a minority, but which being a solid, industrially indispensable class, can disperse and defeat all the classes through the annihilation of the fraudulent democracy of the Parliamentary system implied in the dictatorship of the proletariat, imposed upon society by means of revolutionary mass action. (*Revolutionary Socialism*).

The Communist Party refused to take any part in the first elections after they were formed, regarding them as a delusion. Their manifesto advocating armed force and minority action resulted in suppression by the Government. Through adopting such a programme they drove themselves underground into a secret society in which police

spies played an active part. The Communists thought the revolution was just around the corner, and they foolishly announced (*The Communist*, No. 16): "The day of theorising on the necessity of the revolution is past," and they went on to preach the rule of the few in the organ of the United Communist Party thus:

Furthermore, it is impossible to reach and convert the great mass of the workers. Their minds are controlled by the corrupt capitalist press; their education takes place primarily in capitalist institutions; the capitalist State has the power to close the doors of any proletarian school. This precludes the possibility of reaching and turning to Communism the mass of the workers. (*Communist* No. 16.)

#### "The Workers' Party of America."

When Moscow decided for legal parties, the Communists emerged into daylight and rapidly changed from a party advocating a "revolutionary upsurge" to the most reformist and opportunist party ever calling itself Communist. They decided soon to disband the Communist Party and form themselves into a vote-catching body called The Workers' Party. The decisions of the Third International for a "United Front" of all parties and a reform programme resulted in the "minority mass-actionists" putting up candidates like Rose Pastor Stokes with demands like these:

1. Emergency legislation to combat and stop the reduction of wages.
2. Emergency legislation for the relief and amelioration of the condition of the unemployed.

Under instructions from Moscow International their members went into the unions to oust the old leaders. In this work they bargained for positions and supported reactionaries in return for support of their candidatures in the union. *The Daily Worker* (April 12th, 1924), their official paper, contains some revelations of their class struggle activities on the side of the capitalists. In Michigan their members are prominent in the American Federation of Labour, and have been active in support of Republican and Democratic politicians. This has gone so far that, when told by the Executive of the Workers' Party to start a Farmer-Labour Party, their members and District Executive, anxious to "keep in" with their fellow office-holders in the A.F. of L., answered they could not fight the candidature of Baker, Republican Candidate

for Governor, whom they had previously supported:

A decision to fight his candidacy would involve us in a fight with the trade union leaders. But regardless of our possible decision to make this candidacy an issue later on, it is the opinion of the minority that nothing should be done now to provoke a fight. (*Daily Worker*, April 12th, 1924).

The party still continues its downward course. They entered the Farmer-Labour Conference at St. Paul (June 17th, 1924), where it was expected that Senator La Follette, Republican, would be nominated for the Presidency of U.S.A.

The Workers' Party Executive defend their action in the *Daily Worker* (April 12th, 1924), where the spokesman for the majority of the E.C. produced this reactionary statement: "This step of supporting the candidates of a petty bourgeois liberal Third Party, under the conditions laid down in the thesis of the Central Committee, is a correct one."

This party of political gymnasts, it is only necessary to add, is affiliated to the Third International!

#### The Proletarian Party.

Elements of the Socialist Party which differed with the reform and opportunism of the Socialist Party of America formed the Proletarian Party, after the Russian Federations rejected their programme for the Communist Party at the inaugural conference.

The Proletarian Party accepts the Statutes and Thesis of the Third International, and "unreservedly endorses" the twenty-one points of admission. They claim to be Marxians, and conduct many study classes in economics, but their attempt to be Bolsheviks of the Third International and Marxians at the same time involves them in a good deal of confusion. The "united front" policy led them to send delegates to the Farmer-Labour Conference at Chicago, and the Theses of the Moscow International on reforms or immediate demands makes them hesitant about adopting a revolutionary attitude. Their delegate to the Third Congress at Moscow was expelled recently from the Proletarian Party for supporting capitalist candidates, but only after this had been going on for years and had been brought to a head by protests of new members.

#### The Socialist Educational Societies.

Amidst this confusion and ignorance under the iron heel in America there are signs of promise in the growing study of Marx's writings. Workers in the U.S.A., as a result of study of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, have seen the necessity of carrying on systematic Socialist education. In New York City and in Detroit there are bodies of students of Marx who, by conducting open-air meetings, study classes, and the spreading of sound literature, have earned themselves a wide reputation in the U.S.A., to say nothing of undying hatred by those who thrive upon the ignorance of the workers. The work of propaganda in America is hard. The abysmal ignorance of labour, the power of wealth, the poison of the Press, and the rise of mob law fostered by such millionaire-ruled bodies like the Ku-Klux-Klan, are some of the forces against us. And with the increasing number of so-called labour bodies like the Farmer-Labour Party and the Workers' Party, our work is doubly hard.

K.

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#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. MONK (Edmonton). Your question is superfluous. Inside the cover of "Socialism and Religion" the New York Society state that they are not a political party.



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable. The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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## The Socialist Standard,

JULY,



1924

THE STRIKE  
ON THE UNDERGROUND.

Representations had been made by the shopmen to the N.U.R. over a period of two years for action to be taken on their behalf.

The Strike Committee Statement,  
*Daily Herald*, June 9th.

The strike of 7,000 men on the Underground Railways was "unofficial." And the reason is given in the above quotation. Reduction of wages since the war caused the men to strike against the London Traffic Trust. The Press, the employers, and the National Union of Railwaymen united in denunciation of the men. Mr. Cramp, the Secretary of the N.U.R., says it was "mob law," and advised the railway owners not to negotiate with the strikers. The union leaders were paraded by the Press as safe and sane, and commended for their strong stand. Continual orders were issued by the N.U.R., telling the men to return to work at once. Without strike pay, and with the employers, the Labour Government, and the Union arrayed against them, the men returned to work.

The Labour Government played its usual part of promising protection to those at work during the strike and to maintain the services if the strike spread. Here is the pledge given by the Labour Minister (Mr. Tom Shaw) in the House of Commons:

My answer is, "Yes, undoubtedly the fullest protection will be given to the men who work." The noble lord further wanted to know whether

in the event of the dispute spreading and certain public utilities being threatened, the Government will maintain these public utilities. Again I answer quite as frankly that the Government will do all it possibly can to maintain the public utilities. When I say that I am speaking of food, lighting, water and power, the Government will do all it possibly can and will take every step possible to maintain all these essential services. There will be no question about the fullest possible authority being given to every department of Government to take the steps that I have said the Government are prepared to take, and I hope that the noble lord will admit that my answer has been as frank as he desired it to be.—Official Parliamentary Debates, June 6th, page 1695.

Thus the strikers were awed into submission. The Secretary of the Strike Committee stated in the *Daily Herald* (June 9th) that he had received information that naval ratings would probably be introduced in the power stations. The capitalist *Daily Mail* also stated that, had the strike spread and the tube stations been forced to close, naval ratings would be used.

The electricians in some of the stations struck with the consent of their union, and the last night of the strike they had arranged to meet to consider withdrawing all men from the power stations. Instead of striking, they decided to remain at work. The reason given by the Secretary of the Electricians' Union in the *Daily Herald* (June 13th) was that misapprehension existed in the public mind that the Craft Unions' dispute was connected with the unofficial strike of the members of the N.U.R.

This is a very unconvincing reason, and after the *Daily Herald's* announcement of the certainty of the power house stoppage it caused a good deal of surprise. But the *Evening Standard* (June 13th) representative has the following comment:

What influenced the Electrical Trades Union meeting as much as anything, I understand, was the hint which some of their leaders had received that the Government might take very firm measures, even to the length of using naval ratings in the power houses. No actual decision to take this course had been made by the committee of Ministers, but there can be little doubt that it was expected last night by those present at the conference should the sub-station men be withdrawn.

The companies issued a forty-eight hour ultimatum to the men to return to work or face dismissal, and threatened them with legal proceedings for breach of contract. The men returned to work within the time given.

The Strike Secretary stated after the strike:

Our masters have changed. We have been beaten not so much by the companies as by the National Union of Railwaymen. *Daily Herald*, June 13th.

The length to which the Railway Union officials went in order to defeat the men is stated by one of the striking N.U.R. men:

The Central Strike Committee had their headquarters at the Labour College, Penywern Road. After being in there for some time, without trying to hide the fact, a letter was sent to the Governors of the College, from Unity House, asking them to throw the Strike Committee out, or else H.O. would withhold the Students' fee, and the usual grant to the College.—*Workers' Weekly*, June 20th.

He states that the Labour College gave them a month's notice. This throws a lurid light on the strike-smashing efforts of modern Labour leaders, and it also shows how much the vaunted independence of the labour colleges is worth.

The fact that the strike was largely unofficial has been used to excuse the Labour Government's promise to protect those at work during the strike. This is sheer hypocrisy. During the recent official bus and tram strike the Labour Government prepared to use the Emergency Powers Act (see MacDonald's statement, Parliamentary Debates, March 26th). They then had the Proclamation of a State of Emergency signed ready for publication.

The fact that during that strike they were prepared to carry on emergency services was admitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Philip Snowden, who wrote:

Industrial troubles are causing the Labour Government a good deal of embarrassment. The strike of the London bus and tramway men threatened to develop into a stoppage of all the services on which the vast population of London have to depend for transport. Faced by such a possibility as this the Government had no option but to take immediate steps either to bring the strike to an end, if that were possible, or to organise some kind of emergency service. It was a disagreeable situation for a Labour Government, but one which had to be faced. The Government had to avoid even the appearance of strike-breaking, but they had an obligation to maintain essential services on which the livelihood of the community depends.—Quoted in Parliamentary Debates, June 6th, 1924, page 1679.

This statement of Snowden's was used by Conservatives in the House of Commons as a basis upon which action should be taken during the Underground strike.

The action of the union leaders should

be a lesson for the men. But mere attacks on union leaders count for little. The rank and file have supported these leaders continually because they do not understand the class struggle in which they are engaged. "Loyalty to the leaders" has been a favourite rallying-cry of these highly paid officials, when loyalty to the interests of the working class should be the men's watchword. No real advance will come in union activity until the workers know enough about their real interests and no longer, therefore, need to be led, until they insist on their officials carrying out their instructions. How futile it is merely to change leaders, is shown by the Communist who laments in the *Workers' Weekly* (June 20th, 1924) that some years ago a minority agreed to work for Mr. Cramp to get him into the position of Industrial Secretary in order that the power and influence of Mr. J. H. Thomas could be smashed. As if the power of Thomas could be broken by electing a different official to act with Thomas! The power of these leaders can only be broken when the rank and file themselves know enough to expose and oppose their betrayers. They thought Cramp was a revolutionary because he said, "I do not believe Parliament can do anything for the workers" (quoted same paper).

The limitation of strike action to win lasting advances is shown by all these recent strikes. The supremacy of the employing class, their financial strength, and the slender means of the workers all contribute to the defeat of the worker. The use of political machinery against them should show how necessary is its control by a revolutionary working class. The support given by the railwaymen to the same Labour Party which works against them during strikes is another example of their lack of class-consciousness. And the bitter denunciation of the Labour Government and Labour leaders by the Communist Party during strikes is a ludicrous "joke," considering that the Communist Party tells the workers to vote this Government and these Labour leaders into power.

The fact that the workers have continually to struggle for the most miserable advances in wages, and even then seldom obtain them, should be a lesson to the workers not to establish a Labour Government carrying on Capitalism, but to abolish Capitalism and the wages system it involves.



### MARX AND HIS WORK.

The Scottish land reformer, Dr. G. B. Clark, has once again displayed his hatred for Marx by writing lies in the columns of *Forward*. Dr. Clark, who for a period was treasurer of the Federal Council of the Old International, thinks he can impress upon his readers that he knows all about the history of the International. Dr. Clark's worthless charges may be illustrated from his oft-repeated charge that Marx was lazy! This is good, considering that even the worst capitalist critics of Marx have paid tribute to the monumental research and long painstaking efforts of the writer of those thousands of pages of economic science and Socialist theory. Marx worked as Leibnecht and Engels have told us night and day to scrape a living as well as produce the works which brought him scant reward in his lifetime.

This is how Dr. Clark now makes his own history of the Old International:—

"Karl Marx had nothing to do with the inception of that association, and only joined it when he saw that it was going to be a success. The man who did the most to start it was Mazzini, and nearly all the preliminary work was done by his secretary, Wolff. When Karl Marx found that he could not control it, he did his best to kill it, and I regret to say that he was successful. It is now 52 years since its last Congress was held at The Hague, and two years later half-a-dozen people met in America and passed a resolution dissolving the association."—(*Forward*, June 7th, 1924.)

No evidence is given by Dr. Clark for his statements. They recall very much the attacks made many years ago by the English Labour leader, George Howell, who was bitterly opposed by Marx because of Howell's capitalist ideas. Marx's answer to George Howell, the ex-member of the General Council of the International, is contained in *The Secular Chronicle* for August 4th, 1878. Marx's reply is a complete answer to Dr. Clark's point as to the founders of the International. Says Marx:—

"I believe it worth while to illustrate by a few notes the most recent contribution—see the 'Nineteenth Century' of July last—to the extensive spurious literature of the International's history, because its last expounder, Mr. George Howell, an ex-work-

man and ex-member of the General Council of that association, may erroneously be supposed to have drawn his wisdom from sources not generally accessible.

"Mr. Howell sets about his 'History' by passing by the facts that, on September 28, 1864, I was present at the foundation meeting of the International, was there chosen a member of the provisional General Council, and soon after drew up the 'Inaugural Address' and the 'General Statement' of the association, first issued at London in 1864, then confirmed by the Geneva Congress of 1866."

As to Mazzini every history of the International records the fact that the Constitution drawn up by Mazzini was rejected, and Marx was asked to write it, and did so. What success the International attained was so plainly the work of Marx and his supporters that whenever the International was attacked by the ruling class they denounced Marx as the moving spirit. See, for instance, the secret service agent, Onslow Yorke's *Secret History of the International*. Did Marx try to kill it when he could not control it? Why was it dissolved? Gustav Jaechh, in his "History of the International," and Lessner in his "Sixty Years a Social Democrat," also Susan Day in her history, all point out that the followers of Bakunin, the Anarchist, had made every effort to disrupt the International from within and make it adopt a policy fatal to working-class organisation. The tactics of these continental "force" advocates, and the general apathy which ensued amongst the workers after the fall of the Paris Commune, made it advisable to give up the International organisation for the time and leave it for economic development and ripening knowledge to make the workers more fitted to promote a worthy international body. The tactics of the Anarchists were an added factor to the opposition of servile labour leaders of the British unions who belonged to the International.

It was deemed advisable, therefore, at the time to hold the concluding congress far from the seat of the disruptive elements, and so the New York Congress passed the resolution of dissolution.

How farseeing Marx was in his opposition to the anarchist element was seen the year after the International disbanded. The followers of Bakunin, who formed the International Alliance, engineered a pre-

ture insurrection in Spain, which was crushed in blood. Engels' pamphlets, "The Bakunist on Labour" and the "General Strike in Spain," shows the danger of the anarchist element.

Dr. Clark has often pointed to the alleged unfounded accusations Marx made against Bakunin, but the publication of Bakunin's "Confessions" recently in Russia showed Bakunin's fawning subservience to the Czar of Russia, Alexander II, and justifies Marx. The bitterness of men like Dr. Clark against Marx shows their envy of his remarkable work and his growing world-wide reputation based upon it.

Marx, not Mazzini or Bakunin, is being studied to-day. His opponents in the International left behind them no writings or teachings which have lived or are worth studying.

Marx's writings and ideas are the guide and inspiration of enlightened workers because they fit the facts of modern life.

Dr. Clark's last point is the worst. He says that Marx's principal theory "was propounded many years earlier by Thompson, who was Robert Owens' secretary."

Every student of Marx knows how silly this is. Marx made Thompson known on the continent, and acknowledged the value of his work. In the appendix to the "Poverty of Philosophy" Marx deals with Thompson's work, "The Inquiry into the Principles of Human Happiness" (1827), and shows that Thompson used terms such as surplus value, which are also used by Marx. But the scientific proof of surplus value and its analysis was the work of Marx. Thompson, who was farseeing for his time, was unable to escape from the effect of Owenite Utopianism. Marx and Engels gave Socialist theory a scientific basis. J.O.L.

### THE CAPITALIST HOUSING BILL.

Mr. Wheatley, the Labour Minister of Health, speaking on his housing Bill in the House of Commons, said:—

"Labour does not propose to interfere with private enterprise in the building of houses. Labour does not propose to interfere with private enterprise in the manufacturing of building material. Labour only touches private enterprise here at one point, and that is in the investment of private

capital in the ownership of these rented houses. But what does Labour do in return for that interference? It says to the man with small capital: "Instead of putting your private capital into a risky investment, lend it to the local authorities at 4½ per cent. Without your having any trouble at all you will get a safe return for your money, with all the security behind it of a municipal investment." The Labour party's programme on housing is not a Socialist programme at all."—(Parliamentary Debates, March 26th, p. 1470.)

They don't "interfere with private enterprise" except at one point, he says. The point where they interfere is when they borrow money from bankers, etc., promising them a safe return! Such is the "Red" from the Clyde. A. K.

### A WILL O' THE WISP.

The writer cannot resist the temptation to bring to the notice of readers of the "S.S." the following tit-bit taken from the *Weekly People* (New York) of May 31st, 1924.

The extract is from the National Executive Report to the 16th National Convention of the Socialist Labour Party of America:

"The trouble experienced with the Workers' International Industrial Union office definitely established the following facts:

1. That the W.I.I.U. is not even a propaganda league for Industrial Unionism. That it is a farce where it is not a tragedy, not merely because it is so very small, but above all because these members, or most of them, are already members of the S.L.P., and, accordingly, not even supplemental to the Party, as would naturally be the assumption of the uninitiated.

2. That in the present circumstances the existence of the W.I.I.U. at best is a useless and superfluous duplication of the S.L.P., serving no special function, adding nothing to the movement, either in membership or activity, serving instead as a drain on the financial resources of the Party membership and sympathisers.

3. That the W.I.I.U. has in the past been a source of friction and disturbances in the Party, having done much damage to the Party. And that it to-day is a positive menace to the Party, not merely because of the financial drain, but above all because



the existence of the W.I.I.U. makes inevitable a division of loyalty (dual and potentially conflicting discipline) that would threaten the existence of an organisation many times stronger than the S.L.P."

Is comment necessary? E. B.

### SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

Bishop Montgomery Brown, the retired Bishop of Arkansas, U.S.A., a divine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, has been expelled from the Church for heresy. He is the author of "Communism and Christianity," and the wide sale of this book has made him known far beyond the little town of Galion, Ohio, where he resides.

The Bishop came to write the book through reading the pamphlet issued by the Socialist Party of Great Britain, entitled "Socialism and Religion." Amidst all the sentimental and superstitious writings published on this question in America, our pamphlet stood out as a unique and scientific declaration and commanded wide attention. The interest was so great that the last order from the "Socialist Party of Michigan" was for 1,000 copies, and it was due to this latter body that the Bishop obtained the pamphlet.

The best part of the Bishop's book is the series of quotations from our party pamphlet. Nearly all the religious section of "Communism and Christianity" is unscientific, sentimental and confusing. Take the following: "Socialism is for me the one comprehensive term which is a synonym at once of morality, religion and Christianity" (p. 26). Then he says that Christianity "is a system of parasitism" (p. 31). He claims the same faith as Jesus, of whom he says, "his loyalty was to the truth and to the proletariat" (p. 25). Throughout the Bishop puts far-fetched meanings into Jesus' words and makes a Christianity peculiar to himself. This is a quite common method amongst the "Christian Socialists" whom he condemns. He claims that Jesus taught that "it was the mission of Himself and disciples to establish a new heaven, that is, to remodel the Church, and new earth, that is to remodel the state; both remodellings being with reference to the service of humanity by enlightening its darkness and alleviating its misery here and now, rather than teaching it to look for light and happi-

ness elsewhere and elsewhere" (p. 25). This must be some other Jesus, personally known to the Bishop. The Jesus of Christianity, the Jesus of the New Testament, certainly gives no teaching about remodelling the State and enlightening the darkness. Jesus gave no social teaching. "Take no thought for the morrow," "Resist not evil," "Blessed are ye poor," "Love your enemies," and similar anti-working class notions are not instructions to remodel the State. So far from seeking happiness here, Jesus starts out with the supernatural, and it runs right through the New Testament. "My Kingdom is not of this world," and "I go to my Father in heaven" is the spirit of the Book; the Socialist finds no message for him in the gospel of Jesus, from the beginning to the end. The Bishop admits this later where he says the "Gospel of Jesus" is "exclusively concerned with a celestial world" (p. 32).

This "rebuilding" of Jesus by the Bishop is dangerous to the workers. It is calculated to keep the workers on the side of religion by the false picture of Jesus and his alleged "Socialist" character. It is quite easy to understand how Bishop Brown remained within the Church and fought against his expulsion. Although he is an associate of the Rationalist Press Association, and a professed Evolutionist and self-styled "Marxian," he understands these matters so little that it was possible to reconcile them with a Bishop's position in the Episcopal Church. His muddled attitude went further, for he defended his position at the trial by claiming that the clergy did not literally accept the Bible, and that they had given up many orthodox dogmas. To attempt to compare the "modernizing" of Christianity with the materialism he claimed to hold, is a joke. The "reconciling" or ordination vows of a Bishop with the scientific and revolutionary attitude of our pamphlet on Socialism and Religion is a farce.

We differ therefore from the Labour and Communist Press in America, whose papers are very bitter against the Church for its expulsion of Bishop Brown. We affirm that the materialist and revolutionary nature of Socialism involves opposition to the Church and to Christianity. One who accepts the Socialist position, and realises therefore, the implications of its scientific basis, has no place as a member of the "holy" Church of Christianity. The super-

stition and submission taught by religion is in direct opposition to the philosophy of Socialism.

Our pamphlet was a bombshell to the professional politicians of the Social Reform parties. John M. Work, the secretary of the "S. P. of America," tried to minimise its influence by saying the pamphlet was an irresponsible statement. The "Socialist Labour Party," in reply to questions, continually answered in the words of De Leon that Religion was a private matter, and that a Socialist could hold any opinion he liked about the matter. And the I.W.W. in their leaflets repudiated being "anti-religious," and said "members of the I.W.W. differ as much in their political and religious views as do members of any other organisation" ("The Labour Defender," Dec. 1, 1918). The publication of dozens of pamphlets and books after the style of "Why a Christian should be a Socialist" and Bouck White's "Call of the Carpenter" made our pamphlet a necessary antidote to this rubbish. The issues of an American edition by the Socialist Educational Society of New York a few months ago is therefore very welcome, being made more necessary than ever by the distorted edition issued by an enterprising orator who used its covers to advertise his spiritualist writings.

Mr. John Spargo, who until 1916 was a highly-paid lecturer for the "S.P. of America," devoted a good deal of attention to our pamphlet in his book "Marxian Socialism and Religion." He tries to answer us by saying that Marx was a deeply spiritual man, and that the materialist conception of history was not intended by Marx to be applied as we have done. He quotes part of F. Engels' letters to attempt to show there are spiritual driving forces in history, but the publication of the complete letters in "The Socialist Standard" showed that Mr. Spargo was relying upon the awful ignorance of his dupes and followers in the alleged Socialist Party of America. Spargo knew better than he wrote, as can be seen from the columns of "The Comrade" of New York, for the period in which he edited that paper. His statements of the conflict between Socialism and Religion have been quoted in all the American textbooks for anti-Socialist speakers.

In Great Britain to-day the Socialist Party of Great Britain is still the only party which declares the truth about Socialism and Religion. The parties which seek numbers at the expense of principle are busier than ever preaching all things to all men, and trying to repudiate the charge that Socialism is opposed to Religion. From the Protestant George Lansbury, M.P., to the Catholic, John Wheatley, M.P., the gospel of Jesus is used to swell the ranks of the so-called Labour Parties. The pandering to the ignorance of the masses in order to get votes can find no place in a party working for Socialism. Socialists must rid the workers' minds of their superstitions, religious, economic and political, in order to develop that scientific and revolutionary outlook upon life without which Socialism is impossible. We are not disturbed, therefore, to see that the organ of the British Empire Union—the "Empire Record" (June, 1924)—devotes much space to our pamphlet as an exposure of Socialist hostility towards religion. We take our stand upon the scientific truths of Socialism, regardless of the opposition from fool or knave. The "Empire Record" says: "These Socialists scorn the view that any moral or spiritual reforms are first needed in man himself." Spiritual reforms are then still required after 2000 years of Christianity! His talk about moral reform by those who support a system which results in moral degradation is a joke. And moral reform talk by the Empire Builders who shouted in 1914 for "war to the knife" is not a joke. For the preachers of "hate" in 1914 it is evidently a personal question. No wonder the "Empire Record" heads the paragraph from which we quote, "The decalogue out of date."

"Communist" politicians anxious to "get in" are careful to dodge the question of religion. At Kelvingrove Bye-Election, where Ferguson ran under Labour Party auspices, a complaint was made that some orator attacked religion. The Communist paper "The Worker" (June 7th, 1924), says: "We cannot say we heard of any Communist orator attacking religion as mentioned by the special correspondent." It further states that "it is absurd to suggest that Communist speakers generally attacked religion." The same dodging of the materialist nature of Socialism was



made by the Catholic Francis Meynell when editor of the "Communist," who answered an enquirer by stating that while the logical person must recognise the conflict between Socialism and Religion, logical people are as rare as white blackbirds. This is an evasion of the subject, and is typical of Jesuitical methods.

In Ireland, where asylum attendants have been on strike some time, the strikers have issued leaflets using the Pope's "message" in their support. This message is a quotation from the Encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII on "The Condition of the Working Classes" in 1891. The quotation opens thus:—

"Religion teaches the wealthy owner and employer that their workpeople are not to be accounted their bondsmen," and it goes on to exhort the rich to give the workpeople "a fair wage." The strikers follow the quotation with the slogan, "Labour demands justice." These good Catholic strikers fail to see that the same letter of the Pope can be quoted with greater force by the employers. For Pope Leo says: "Thus religion teaches the labouring man and artisan to carry out honestly and fairly all equitable agreements freely entered into; never to injure the property nor to outrage the person of an employer, never to resort to violence in defending their own cause nor to engage in riot or disorder." The employers could quite easily quote the Encyclical letter of the recent Pope Benedict XV (1914) entitled "Ad Beatissimi," an extract from which is the following:—

"The second cause of the general unrest we declared to be the absence of respect for the authority of those who exercise ruling. Ever since the source of human powers has been sought apart from God the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, in the free will of men, the bonds of duty which should exist between superior and inferior have been so weakened as almost to have ceased to exist. The unrestricted striving after independence together with overweening pride has little by little found its way everywhere; it has not even spared the home although the natural origin of the ruling power is as clear as the noonday sun; nay, more deplorable still is has not stopped at the steps of the sanctuary. Hence comes contempt for laws, insubordination of the masses and wanton criticism of orders issued, hence innumerable

cases of undermining authority . . . 'There is no power but from God and those that are, are ordained of God.'"

The increasing indifference of the workers to religion is shown by the speech of the Rev. E. W. Sara, Director of the Bishop of London's Sunday School Council. *The Times* reports his speech to the Church of England's Men's Society at Bradford:—

Mr. Sara described the present-day drift away from organised religion as "an appalling leakage." It constituted a grave challenge to the Church. While Churchmen continued to think chiefly of the respectable few in the front pews, the young people were being lost. In the London diocese alone 16,000 boys and girls had been lost from Bible classes since the war, 16,000 from the Church Lads' Brigade, nearly 4,000 from the Girls' Friendly Society, and 8,000 from the senior Bands of Hope. Those figures were typical of the whole country. There were 3,000,000 lapsed communicants, of whom the London Diocese alone counted 300,000.

The decay of religion amongst workers of the Hebrew race has caused much uneasiness to the clergy. Professor C. G. Montefiore in his "Judaism and Democracy" states that:

There is a considerable section of the Jewish proletariat which is out of sympathy with the Jewish religion, or, indeed, with religion generally, and at all. This estrangement from religion is mainly true as regards one particular section of Jewish democracy, namely, the social democrats or socialists. . . . They are inclined to be opposed to everything which has been a comfort to, and has been held dear by, the upper class, the bourgeoisie.

The Professor has to make this confession about religion:—

It has bidden people be obedient to their rulers and their kings, obedient and subservient. The book of proverbs, for instance, encourages submission to, and fear of, the constituted authority. A King is the Lord's Anointed. Religion has devised a sort of hierarchy from the authority of fallible and visible men to the authority of an infallible and invisible God. It has entered, as I have said, into an understanding with the great ones of the earth. In return for their support and acknowledgment it has buttered and buttressed them up in their greatness and their privileges.

This lecturer of the Jewish Religious Union justifies all we say of the function of religion in the class struggle. It is the agent of class domination. W. EDGAR.

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION."

The Socialist Educational Society of New York have, by permission of the S.P.G.B., reprinted the above pamphlet. The S.P.G.B. are the sole agents for the pamphlet in this country, and copies can be obtained from Head Office at 5d. each, postage 1d. extra, special terms for quantities.

## THE LABOUR PARTY VOTES FOR STRIKE-SMASHING BILL.

We are threatened with strikes and lock-outs, and disputes and disturbances. How childish it all is! How foolish it all is! What has happened? Why is there now no mutual confidence? Surely these things can be arbitrated.—Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speech to Free Churches at Brighton, March 6th, 1924.

"The Right to Strike" is supposed to be the charter of Trade Unionism. Ever since unions were formed the masters have used every device to smash strikes. Now comes the Labour Party, when in office, supporting a Bill to make strikes illegal.

The Industrial Councils Bill provides for the setting up of joint industrial councils whose decisions will become law. Every individual who refuses to abide by them will be fined £50.

At the Trade Union Congress in 1922 the present War Secretary said that "if this Bill were passed it would mean compulsory arbitration." The Congress voted against it. Mr. Naylor, of the Compositors, spoke against it there. The Delegate of the Distributive Works pointed out that his experience of the Trade Boards Act showed that in many cases nothing was done when employers infringed the Trade Boards Act. The Bill was also denounced at the Congress by Brownlie, of the Engineering Union.

When the voting on the second reading of the Bill took place in the House of Commons only 16 voted against it. The majority of the Labour members voted for this anti-strike measure, and the second reading was carried by 236 to 16.

In spite of the agreements continually ignored by employers, and the paralysing effect of Whitley Councils, the so-called spokesman of Labour joined with the capitalists in supporting the Bill. The fact that Conciliation Boards on the railways played havoc with the railwaymen, that trade unionists have continually been compelled to strike to get "awards" carried into effect; and that in Australia and elsewhere compulsory arbitration has been a strong weapon in the hands of the employers; despite these glaring facts, these alleged Labour men vote for even stronger powers to be given to the ruling class against the victims of the present system.

The quotation which heads this article explains the reason. The Labour Party tells

the workers to have confidence in employers who live by the robbery of labour.

The reason capitalists supported the aims of this Councils Bill was stated by Dr. Macnamara, the capitalist politician during the debate. "Whitleyism is the reply to Socialism" was his defence of the Bill the Labour members supported.

The anti-Socialist actions of the so-called Labour Party were made plain by Dr. Macnamara's answer to David Kirkwood during the debate. This Liberal member quoted the report of the Sub-Committee on Reconstruction made to the Government in 1917. The report begins with this gem:—

In the interests of the community it is vital that after the war the co-operation of all classes, established during the war, should continue, and more especially with regard to the relations between employers and employed.

The report was signed by Robert Smillie, Susan Lawrence, and J. R. Clynes!

If further proof were required of the anti-strike attitude of the Labour Party, it is supplied by the vote on Lansbury's amendment to the Army Annual Bill. In 1923, when they were in opposition, 101 Labour members voted for this same amendment. The amendment states that when enlisting in the army the recruit shall have the option of refusing to take duty in aid of the civil power in connection with a trade dispute. When the same amendment was voted upon this year (April 2nd) under a Labour Government, out of nearly 200 Labour members only 67 voted in favour of this amendment. It was defeated by 236 to 67. The members of the Labour Government voted against it, and included amongst them were many of the so-called pacifists who voted for it in 1923.

Apart altogether from Lansbury's consent (which is implied in the amendment) to the building up of an army at all, for capitalism, the fact that the Labour members continually supported it before they took office confirms our charge against them of unblushing hypocrisy and reaction. A.C.A.

## NEW YORK.

Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD in that City interested in Socialist Educational Work are invited to get in touch with the

Socialist Educational Society  
of New York,

127 University Place New York City.



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**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

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**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

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**TOOTING.**—Sec., W. A. Griffin, 64, Park-rd., Merton, S.W.19. Branch meets at "The Royal Six Bells," High-st., Merton, S.W., Thursday, 8 p.m. Public invited.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 12, High Cross road, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to A. J. Godfrey, 30, Waverley road, Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

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Leytonstone, The Green Man, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 3 p.m.

**Mondays:** Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

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Tooting, Church Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Baths), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Edmonton, The Green, 8 p.m.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE USELESS CAPITALIST. THE EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC EVOLUTION.

Although it is a century and a half since the commencement of the most rapid expansion of the productive forces in the history of human society, institutions and ideas still prevail which were adapted only to the conditions preceding that expansion. In an age when the Capitalist has nothing to do but draw dividends, we are still told by people who profess to know, that we cannot do without him. Let us examine this assertion.

It is, of course, obviously true that so long as Capitalists own the means of wealth production, non-Capitalists must depend upon them for permission to exist. To the worker who thinks, however, it is equally obvious that what he cannot do without is the property, not the property-owner. Without access to the soil for raw materials, and machines for dealing therewith, human beings cannot satisfy their most elementary requirements; but where is the necessity for the ownership of the land, factories, etc., by a special class of privileged individuals who derive a work-free existence because of their ownership?

How did the Capitalist class come into being? What necessity brought them on to the stage of social life? History furnishes us with an answer. It shows that less than five hundred years ago in this country production was carried on by the worker and his family independently. The peasant in the country cultivated his plot of land, mainly for his own use, selling only his surplus produce. In the towns the craftsman and his apprentices (limited in number by rule of the guild) worked in his own shop with his own tools. His goods, of course,

were mainly for sale, at first in order to meet a local demand. In the course of time, however, as trade developed between different localities, the national and even international, markets developed also. Obviously, the workers could not travel far and wide with their goods. Consequently, they came to depend upon a special class of traders. The isolation of the producers placed them at the mercy of the middleman.

From this middleman trader has developed by stages the Capitalist of to-day. For a time his activities were mainly confined to buying and selling, but with further increase in trade and in the productive powers of the workers, he began to hunger for the surplus to be obtained by having his own workshop and employees. The conditions were favourable. The break up of feudalism and the enclosure of large estates set free by degrees a landless, masterless class of men and women from whose ranks could be drawn as much labour-power as was required.

The merchants commenced to set up small factories in competition with the workshops of the craftsmen. In these factories the work was split up into its various detail processes, each worker being confined to one process. Greater speed and a greater output were thus obtained at the sacrifice of the worker's general skill and interest in his work. At this stage the Capitalist was not merely the owner of the factory. He took part in the direction of the workers and in the supervision of the whole process of production. Nevertheless, he was from the first an exploiter. The wealth produced belonged not to the whole body of workers but to him. Private ownership of socially



produced wealth was thus established.

At this point commenced the sharp antagonism, which is the principal feature of modern life, between Capitalist and worker. Capital, ever restless, seeking to grow at the expense of the worker's energy, chafed at the limitations of that energy. The division of labour above described was developed to the highest pitch, its possibilities were exhausted and still capital longed for fresh worlds to conquer.

At this time new countries were being discovered, explored and opened up for trade, and a rapidly developing world market seemed to offer a limitless demand. How to satisfy it? That was the problem.

Although much reduced in circumstances a certain number of handicraftsmen still lingered on trying to compete with the slaves in the factories, but their extinction was at hand. In the textile industries at first invention after invention replaced detail-labourers by machines, and steam-power provided the means of driving them. The handicraftsmen were finally ruined and the conditions of the wage-slaves in the factories became more and more degraded by this new onslaught of capital. The reader can refer to H. de B. Gibbins' "Industrial History" for an account of the horrors which followed. The increase in the power of producing wealth proved to be a weapon in the hands of the exploiting class to reduce to grinding poverty and degradation the great bulk of the population.

In order to ensure its own survival the exploiting class has had to moderate the reckless indulgence of its greed by legal restrictions. Its essential character is in no way altered, however, while its one-time function as director of industry has passed into the hands of a special section of the working class. Managers, superintendents, foremen, etc., have long ago relieved the Capitalist of any direct personal concern with the supervision of the process of production and distribution. The wealth produced is so great that he can riot in luxury thousands of miles from the scene of his slaves' labour. Originally an agent of economic progress the Capitalist has been rendered superfluous by that progress. Henceforth he is simply a parasite on the social body, preventing the workers from enjoying the fruits of their increasingly productive labour.

It is an oft-repeated assertion that society

has always been divided into rich and poor and always will be. People who make this assertion show, by so doing, that they have entirely left out of account the continual expansion in the power to produce wealth, which has taken place since prehistoric times. A moment's reflection will convince any thinking person that in the remote past it was a sheer impossibility for society to be so divided, since the productive power of labour was so small as to be sufficient only for the needs of the labourers themselves. A rich class freed from toil cannot exist unless the labourers produce a *surplus* over and above their own wants. Such a class, therefore, did not, in fact, arise, until the tools of production and the possibility of organising the producers had made some considerable advance above the level of the savage and the barbarian.

The enjoyment of leisure and comfort, however, was necessarily limited to a small class so long as the productive forces were yet too limited to provide leisure and comfort for *all*. Under such circumstances wealth inevitably became the object of a struggle within society itself. It could be obtained only by those whose position enabled them to exploit the producers.

To-day, however, we are faced with a situation entirely different. There is no question about the possibility of producing sufficient wealth to provide comfort and leisure for *all*. The industrial revolution has swept aside all the old limitations of production. The "problem" to-day is one of distribution. So long as the Capitalist class is allowed to hold the means of labour as a source of profit that problem will remain unsolved. The failure of the master class to solve it is demonstrated by periodical industrial, commercial and financial crises; by gluts, bad trade, wars and the growing menace of the unemployed.

It is upon the workers that the task of finding the solution falls, since until the solution is found they must endure increasing suffering. The Socialist Party points to the solution. The means of life, operated as they are by the workers collectively must be *controlled* collectively; they must be made the common possession of society. Wealth must be produced for social use and not for private profit. The industrial revolution has made the social revolution possible, nay, inevitable.

E. B.

## SOCIALISM AND BIRTH CONTROL.

The New Generation League (formerly Malthusian League) aims at eliminating poverty, unemployment, and other social evils, as well as war, by the simple method of reducing over-population, by enabling married couples to restrict their families to those children for whom they can properly care, and give a reasonable chance for a happy and useful existence.—(*New Generation*, June.)

As Socialists, we are not opposed to the teaching of sexual physiology, but welcome any knowledge based upon the facts of life conducive to health or comfort. Our opposition is to the claim that even a general application of such teachings (the use of contraceptive methods of birth control), can remove deep-rooted social evils such as is claimed in the quotation given above.

Working class poverty prevails throughout the Capitalist world, irrespective of fiscal systems, forms of government, rising or falling birth rates, etc. It exists because the abundance of wealth produced by the workers is in the hands of the non-producers, the Capitalists, who own the means and results of production. The workers' share of that wealth is wages, a fraction of the total values they produce. Wealth is produced to-day for markets, which relatively shrink as world competition grows more intense. Labour saving devices increase the number of unemployed, as they reduce the number required for a given amount of production. Wars are fought either to extend or retain markets for the disposal of wealth primarily produced for sale. The propertyless condition of the workers compels them to enter the Labour market in order to meet the owners of their means of living—the buyers of their Labour power—and the effective sale of that labour power is expressed in its price or wage.

As far as the adult male worker is concerned, that wage is based upon the cost of maintaining a family. Those without families gain a small advantage while that difference is maintained.

The Neo-Malthusian contention, however, lays chief stress not upon the gain to the individual family from a reduction of its size below its normal, but upon the gain to the labouring classes in general by following a policy which by restricting the supply of labour raises its market price. (Report of the Commission on The Falling Birth Rate (Chapman & Hall), Page 28, 1916.)

This might be true if other things re-

mained equal, but they never do. The war reduced the working class in numbers, but did its conclusion bring improvement in their conditions? Even the steady reduction of the working population, carried out by whatever means, could never keep pace with the number displaced by the introduction of labour saving devices.

Any tendency for "costs" to increase is a direct incentive for installing wages-saving methods and a shortage of labour would hasten their adoption. To reduce the size of the average family is no remedy, as under the competitive conditions of to-day a general lowering in the cost of living brought about by smaller families would mean lowered wages:—

The value of labour power resolves itself into the value of a definite quantity of the means of subsistence. It therefore varies with the value of these means, or with the quantity of labour required for their production. (*Capital*, Page 151.)

A number of statistics and facts from Henry George (*Progress and Poverty*) right up to the Commission report on the birth rate mentioned above, bear evidence that high and low fertility are closely related to poverty and comfort respectively. In plant and animal life we observe similar tendencies as a result of the struggle for the food supply. The wealthy are not so because they restrict their families. Their lowered fertility results from their luxurious and comfortable lives.

Darwin noted that 19 per cent. of the nobility were sterile. ("Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics," Page 383.)

The workers, as a class, are not poor because of their larger families. Wealth has increased much faster than population. The workers are born poor, remain poor, single or married, employed or unemployed, abstainers or moppers, with small families or large, and their larger families result from their keen struggle for existence.

In fact, not only the number of births and deaths, but the absolute size of the families stand in inverse proportion to the height of wages, and therefore to the amount of means of subsistence of which the different categories of labourers dispose. This law of Capitalist society would sound absurd to savages or even civilised colonists. It calls to mind the boundless reproduction of animals individually weak and constantly hunted down. (*Capital*, Page 658.)

The workers are poor today in the midst of what is termed over-production. Unlike the reformers (birth controllers included) we



do not approach the question of social evils with the assumption that Capitalism is inevitable and eternal. To us those evils have a definite cause, to be sought for in their social epoch. We cannot expect to understand modern war or unemployment by studying ancient society, hence the present population question is essentially a Capitalist one. Its solution is the removal of the system that gives rise to it and other social evils, and the establishment of Socialist society in which the conflicting elements of to-day will cease to exist. While production is limited to the needs of our masters' markets, while the workers must limit their consumption of wealth to the meagre purchasing power of their wages, while every labour-saving method is, in the control of the Capitalist class, a means to a greater output with a relatively fewer number of workers, while, in short, the present system remains, conditioned as it is by the monopoly of the means of life by the Master class, an ever-increasing number of the workers must go to swell the surplus population of Capitalism—the "over population" of the Birth Controllers. To talk of the lack of means of subsistence to-day is childish; apart from the fact that the workers sustain the wealthy "unemployed" in riotous luxury, those surplus to the production of wealth under the present social system, become such long, long before our powers to produce are utilised to their capacity.

MAC.

### HOW THE LAW PROTECTS PROPERTY.

The foundation of Capitalist society and civilisation is—as its name indicates—the private ownership of property. The state or the organisation of government in Capitalist society exists nominally to preserve the equilibrium—the balance of antagonistic forces within society—and it does this by maintaining with all the power at its command this private property basis.

In the fulfilling of this, its primary purpose, the State acts in the main according to certain rules—rules of its own making—which collectively are known as "the Law."

The protection of property and the preservation and enforcement of the social forms and observances dependent upon property is thus the essential function of the Law.

These are elementary facts of sociology, well known to Socialists, but, unfortunately, still unrecognised by the majority of our fellow-workers. Their minds are so warped by the press, platform and other agencies of mis-education controlled by the property owning class that for them, as for the parasites who live and flourish on them, the Law is the great and wonderful preserver of social order without which all organisation would vanish and anarchy prevail.

The Law thus regarded comes to have a halo of sanctity thrown around it. It becomes a god-like power, beneficent in its ruling but terrible in its vengeance upon the transgressors. As a god it has its own sacred books and ritual, its prophets, priests and tabernacles.

Through all this glorification and mysticism the Socialist must crash with the axe of his logic and show the world's workers that the Law is one of the most powerful weapons of those who exploit and oppress them—that it is an agent of slave owners for the perpetuation of slavery.

\* \* \*

There is still abundant evidence that the law continues to prefer property to persons. For example, if you assault an ordinary person the maximum punishment is one year's imprisonment, but if you are a poacher and assault a gamekeeper the maximum sentence rises to seven years' penal servitude. One might think that a policeman had interests to safeguard as valuable as those of the gamekeeper, but the law holds that if you assault a policeman in the execution of his duty the maximum punishment must not be more than two years' imprisonment.

On the other hand, forgery affecting the transfer of money or money's worth can be rewarded by a sentence of penal servitude for life, and so can malicious damage to bridges, railways, and ships, and even such damage to plants in a garden can be punished by five years' penal servitude. If three or more persons go poaching a sentence of fourteen years may await them, but if a man indecently assaults a woman or a girl two years' imprisonment is the maximum imprisonment, and if you allow a girl of 14 or 15 years of age to reside in a brothel the utmost indignation of the law is expressed by six months' imprisonment. (*Manchester Guardian*, July 26th, 1924).

R. W. H.

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION."

The Socialist Educational Society of New York have, by permission of the S.P.G.B., reprinted the above pamphlet. The S.P.G.B. are the sole agents for the pamphlet in this country, and copies can be obtained from Head Office at 5d. each, postage 1d. extra, Special terms for quantities.

## POLICY AND TACTICS OF SOCIALISM.

Suggested Lessons for Study Classes in Socialism.

### LESSON No. 1.

*The Basis of Socialist Policy—The Class Struggle.*

Relations between Capitalists and Wage Workers defined.

1. The population to-day is made up of all kinds of people, showing much variation in their persons and habits. They differ in size and age, health and mind, dress and looks, and in every family circle we see wide differences in form, mind and conduct. With all this variation, there is a broad line of distinction, which divides the members of modern society into classes.

2. What is a class? Is it a group of people possessing some taste, habit, or ability, in common? No. A class in society is a body of people distinguished by their economic position. What divides one part of the population from the other, and separates them into classes, is the possession or non-possession of wealth and the necessity or otherwise of having to work for employers. There have been classes ever since private property existed; but the classes we are concerned with are those existing in the present social system. Class lines may not be as absolute and sharp as a mathematical figure, but the above property distinctions generally mark off one class from another.

3. There are two classes to-day. One, the working class, who do not possess property, and are therefore compelled to sell their mental and physical ability, that is, their working power, to owners of wealth in order to live. Whether they are employed in an office or a mine; whether they are paid wages or salaries, as long as they are driven through lack of property to seek a master, they are members of the working class.

The other class in modern society is the Capitalist or Master class. They own the means and instruments required for producing wealth, but take no part in production themselves. They buy the workers' mental and physical energy which is used to produce the wealth. The Capitalists pay the workers in the form of wages, just

enough to live upon whilst working, and they retain the surplus themselves.

One class owns the means of production and the products, but does not produce. The other class produces, but does not own the wealth.

The working class possess only their labour-power—their energy. Like bread, coal, etc., it is an article of merchandise—a commodity. They must sell this to Capitalists in order to get the food, clothing and shelter they need.

4. The buyers of all kinds of commodities have an interest in buying as cheaply as possible. The seller's interest is to sell as highly as possible. Obviously, therefore, the interests of buyers and sellers are opposite and conflict with each other.

The workers' commodity, labour-power, is distinguished, however, from all other commodities by the fact that the buyers of that commodity are all of one class and the sellers all belong to another class. The masters are always buyers of labour, and the workers always sellers.

These relations of employers and employed, masters and servants, are due to the divisions of property in society. Out of the material conditions of production and distribution arises the separation of the population into two distinct groups: property owners and wage workers. The ownership of the means of production by the Capitalists and the resulting enslavement of the working class is the basis of the class struggle.

### The Hostility Between The Classes.

5. The welfare of each class depends upon its position in society. In other words, the position occupied by the classes gives them distinct interests, according to their place in the social system.

The Capitalist class, being a property-owning class, have a direct interest in protecting their present property and seeking to increase it. Their interest is to pay as little in wages and keep as much in profits as possible.

The working class is a class that lives by working for the owners of capital and their immediate interest is to get as much as possible in the form of wages for the fewest hours. Moreover, they are the only class which produces the wealth and consequently their interests are to obtain the product of their industry.



6. The interests of the working class and the Capitalist class are different. Not only different, but opposite. The Capitalists' interest is to maintain the slavery of the workers, and retain as much as possible of the fruits of the workers' industry. The workers' interest is to end their slavery and to abolish the profits of the Capitalists by enjoying all the wealth themselves.

7. Conflicting interests cause these classes to take actions in defence of their interests, and those actions constitute an unceasing struggle—the class struggle. This struggle arises from the existence of classes and will continue until the class distinctions are abolished and consequently the classes with them.

A Capitalist may be a genial, so-called kind hearted man with good intentions, but as a property owner and employer of labour, he is compelled to take a position and engage in actions hostile to the workers.

The class struggle is a fact. The Capitalists know it and pursue their policy accordingly, so that they may be victors. Most of the workers do not realise that the class struggle exists. Their day-to-day actions as wage slaves, however, in bargaining about terms with employers, and the disputes arising out of it, demonstrate that, whether the workers are conscious of their interests or not, the class struggle goes on.

#### Battle Ground of the Conflict.

8. The class struggle originates out of economic conditions. It manifests itself on the industrial field in the never ceasing conflict about the every-day conditions of employment, and on the political field it shows itself as a struggle by Capitalists to retain their ruling power against any attempts to unseat them.

The actions taken by the employers to obtain wage-workers, the methods used to exploit them, and the policy pursued in strikes and lock-outs to defeat them, are part of the class struggle. The workers' resistance to the actions of the employers and their efforts to get the best possible price and terms for their labour-power through strikes, etc., are incidents in the same class struggle.

9. The foremost battlefield of the class struggle, however, is the political field. On that plane the masters obtain their ruling power and there they concentrate to wield

power over the working class. Every class in history which has risen to supremacy has had to obtain control of the political power. Through that political control the masters are able to use the armed forces and the legal machinery against the workers in the class struggle. With their political power the masters are able to defeat strikers, to starve workers, to keep unemployed workers from getting food, to make war and drive the workers to fight for them. As the political machine is the lever whereby classes dominate, the highest expression of the class struggle is on the political field.

10. The master class carry on the struggle against the workers by enacting and administering laws, by controlling the press, the church and the school, and using them to try to prevent the workers taking steps to wrest political control from the Capitalists.

#### Consciousness of the Struggle Essential to Victory.

11. The workers are in the class struggle, but are not conscious of their interests. Hence they fight, blindly and vainly to improve their condition. Inside the unions, in political parties and in their every-day actions they do things which work to the Capitalists' advantage. They continue to act on lines which perpetuate the system that enslaves them, and support men, measures and parties that work against the workers' interests.

The workers must recognise that the class struggle exists. They must become aware of their slave position, and the way out, if they are to prosecute the struggle to a victorious conclusion for themselves. If the working class become conscious of their class interests and welfare, they will refuse to take actions which injure them. The guiding policy for class-conscious workers must be: Will a contemplated action assist the workers to triumph in the class struggle?

#### No Compromise.

12. Any action taken by the workers against their own interests assists the Capitalists to retain power. Those who advise the workers to support the Capitalists, or their policies and ideas, are helping to strengthen the position of the Capitalist class.

The interests of the Capitalists being op-

posed to the workers upon every point of social life and conduct, the action of the workers must be ever hostile to that of the Capitalists. In their fight to retain control, the masters are ruthless, brutal, and know no mercy; and the workers must expect no help from them, but wage the struggle intelligently and unceasingly against them.

Every political party expresses the interests of one class or other, and the party expressing working class interests must, therefore, be opposed to all other parties.

#### Results of the Struggle.

13. The object of the conscious struggle by the workers must be to raise themselves to the position of ruling class.

The class struggles throughout history, of chattel slave holder and chattel slave, feudal lord and merchant, etc., have been forces in the progress of society. The struggle between the wage working and Capitalist class is also a force making for social development, and the victory of the working class will mean the end of class rule. The working class is the last subject class to be emancipated, and their supremacy will result in the abolition of class distinctions through the common ownership of the means of life.

The interests of the workers are identical in spite of the apparent hostility between individual workers in their struggle for jobs. They are all victims of Capitalist domination and dependent upon the employing class for permission to live. "Solidarity" must be the motto of the working class, as an injury to one is an injury to all. A. KOHN.

#### MORE JOY FOR MINERS.

The *Daily News* "Trade Survey" is a column always worth reading. Take that of June 6, for instance. You will there discover that our coal export trade is, in a manner of speaking, going rapidly to pot. According to the returns, our coal exports for April were 24 per cent. less than last year's monthly average and the worst for two years. What has happened? This:—

Since the collapse of passive resistance in the Ruhr, France, Belgium, Italy and Luxembourg have been obtaining from Germany a large amount of the coal supplies they were previously compelled to obtain from Great Britain. Last year France and Luxembourg were able to extract from German sources only 420,000 tons a month on an average. In April of the present year the amount received was more than 1,300,000 tons.

Continental countries outside Germany are winning coal from their own territories on an increasing scale. The mines of Northern France are back again practically to the pre-war rate of production; Holland and Belgium are producing at more than the pre-war rate.

This is good news indeed for the miner. Those who formed part of the late Miners' Battalion will feel especially ecstatic. Those who are satisfied with Capitalism are about to experience another example of its manifold benefits to the working class in general and the miners in particular. We may as well complete the quotation:—

Those who take a pessimistic view point out that more distant markets, such as South Africa, India, and the Far East are drawing less on British and more on their native sources of supply; that the navies of the world were in pre-war times coal-driven, and are now oil-driven, while oil bunkers are becoming steadily more popular in the mercantile marine.

Of course there is a moral. In fact, two. Perhaps you would like to hear the *Daily News* man's first:—

The moral is that, as British coal has much less of a monopoly in various markets of the world than in pre-war days, every effort should be made to sell at a competitive price which, in turn, involves the adoption of the most efficient and economical means of production at home, and the consent of the workers, if need be, to possible sacrifices as regards wages and hours of labour.

"If need be?" "Need" will "be" all right, one may depend. You may or may not like that moral. This is the other: As the coal mines are owned by a small and useless group of people who only allow them to be used when a profit to themselves is assured, and who, further, take advantage of our propertyless condition to hire us for the price of subsistence; and as, further, the whole of industry is run upon the same basis, we will join with our fellow slaves in all occupations, and seizing the mines, the railways, the land and the factories, will become our own masters and abolish the rule of the few.

We hope you like the second moral better.

W. T. H.

#### NEW YORK.

Readers of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD in that City interested in Socialist Educational Work are invited to get in touch with the

Socialist Educational Society  
of New York,

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1924

**LABOUR RULES THE EMPIRE WITH BOMBS AND BULLETS.**

The repeated use of bombs in Mesopotamia by the Air Force since the Labour Government came into office is another item in their black and brutal record. It shows how willing they are to do the dirty work for the capitalists in maintaining their ownership and control. Under the Conservative Government bombs were frequently used to aid in compelling payment of taxes, but, of course, that was "the dirty method of the Capitalists." How similar the rule of the Labour Party is was admitted by Mr. Leach, the Labour Minister, in the House of Commons in answer to a Tory question. He said:—

We communicated with our military and air headquarters in Iraq in regard to the whole situation in bombing operations, and I cannot honestly say that we have made any change in the policy of the late Government.—(*Parliamentary Debates*, June 30, column 925.)

This "pacifist" minister defends bombing as a humane method and tells the *Daily Herald* (July 15) that it is "a great saving to the taxpayer," as military forces cost more! In the language of an Empire Builder, he talks of the necessity to stop the tribesmen fighting, so that the land of oil annexed to "our Empire" shall be a sweet land of peace and profit. Therefore, the Labour Government is suppressing all at-

tempts at rebellion by the kindly and Christian use of bombs.

This rule of force in the interests of Capital is shown also by the shooting down of Indians under this Labour Government.

In April the brutal exploitation in the cotton mills of Cawnpore drove the workers to strike and on the grounds of "law and order" the police were ordered to fire on the strikers. Three strikers were killed and 34 injured.

In March the cotton slaves at Bombay were on strike and the firing on the strikers is thus described by the *Daily Herald* (April 7-24):—

It is stated in responsible Indian circles that the conduct of the strikers had been exemplary, that no magistrate was present, and no adequate warning given when the firing began and that the police did not as usual fire in the air first, but directly at the crowd, and that schoolboys taking no part whatever in the demonstration were killed.

Within the period of six weeks the third case of shooting took place at Jaito upon a crowd of Sikhs engaged in their religious ceremonies and since then no Nationalist or Indian journalist has been allowed to enter the locality, according to the *Herald* (April 7).

This brutal rule under a Labour Government takes place in a country where Ramsay MacDonald tells us (*The Awakening of India*) "only the faintest glimmer of trade unionism is streaking his (the Indian's) horizon with light." On the Prime Minister's own showing, therefore, the working class are very weak in union organisation in India and the bloody efforts to kill it altogether under "Labour" Rule is clear evidence of the Labour Party's work for Capitalism.

The shooting and bombing of "natives of the Empire" is strictly in accord with the policy of Imperialism. The Labour Party's work to maintain Capitalist rule is on a level with the Liberal and Conservative policy of the past. Every worker, therefore, can take note of the Capitalist nature of the so-called Labour Government, as clearly shown by their deeds.

If Mesopotamia and India are not enough evidence of Empire under "Labour," the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Thomas, supplies a further example. When the "hero" responsible for the massacre of strikers on the Rand, Mr. Smuts, was defeated, Thomas eulogised him to the skies. Said our Labour Colonial Secretary: "There is no man

more entitled to our gratitude and appreciation than General Smuts" (*Daily Herald*, June 20). The day previous the *Herald* had to confess that Smuts was responsible for the slaughter of 300 natives by machine gun fire in 1921, the bloody suppression of the Rand Strike in 1922 and the Bondelswarts massacre in 1923.

Such is the hero worshipped by Labour's choice! The Labour Party, pacifist and militarist, Fabian and I.L.P. combined, are once again shown to be the enemies of the working class. And "Communist" place seekers and vote catchers are supporting the Labour Party! Even after the slaughter referred to above has been made public we find Walton Newbold, of the Communist Party, declaring, "The more I have seen of the Labour Party, the more I have liked it." (*Forward*, June 14, 1924).

The Socialist Party is not like the Communists "out to steal the Leadership of the Labour Party." We are out for Socialism, and therefore stand for the capture of political power by a Socialist working class. Then, and only then, will the butchery by Capital and its Labour agents be impossible.

**A LOOK ROUND.****THE GLORIES OF THE EMPIRE.**

I can see nothing but progress in the British Empire and nothing but progress in the British race. (Lord Leverhulme, *Daily Sketch*, May 3rd, 1924.)

Our noble Lord, including his "directive ability," has returned from a world tour; in the meantime the production of soap and margarine had proceeded undisturbed. One lesson the workers have yet to learn is that had Leverhulme taken the whole of the Capitalist class with him the production and distribution of wealth would have been unhindered as far as their absence is concerned.

The results of his observations appear to be as mythical as his directive ability, or perhaps he has peculiar notions of progress. According to that organ of Empire (*Observer*, May 4, 1924) the number of persons in Great Britain in receipt of poor law relief for the year ending 1923, had reached a proportion higher than at any period since 1879. One town within the "Empire," namely Glasgow, sheltered within its police cells, not as prisoners, but as "destitute

persons," 51,598 people within that same year (*Parl. Debates*, February 19, 1924). Pages could be filled with similar items of starvation, disease and despair, touching every phase of working-class life. Space only permits of one further item, illustrative, in an indirect manner, of the sanctity of family life (Capitalist variety) on which we are for ever told the greatness of our Empire was built:—

Before the Royal Commission upon Venereal Disease, a witness estimated that in the British Isles there are about 850,000 fresh cases of venereal disease every year. (Pamphlet issued by the National Council for Combating Venereal Disease.)

\* \* \*

**THE MEANING OF THE HOUSING BILL.**

The Wheatley method of presentation of the Housing Bill has not conduced to its ready acceptance, except by those who hate Capitalism in whatever shape or manner it may be presented. (*Democrat*, July 11, 1924).

Even were the above statement true it could still be shown that the Labour Party's Housing scheme is not only a necessary Capitalist reform, but that it will confer a much greater benefit upon that class than upon the workers. Every reform, whether it has been the franchise, the factory Acts, or old age pensions (all reforms equally essential to advancing Capitalism) has met with sectional opposition from the master class, an opposition always more or less fraudulent, and calculated to convey the impression that the opponents' only thoughts are for their wage slaves. A peep behind the Capitalist scenes reveals the truth of the above and shows the lying nature of the statement that the Labour Party are Socialists. Introducing the Housing Bill Mr. Wheatley said:—

I notice that the right Honourable member for Twickenham in criticising my proposals the other day, said: "This is real Socialism." . . . I am going to remind them as the representatives in this house of the great industrialists of the country. . . for the sake of their pockets, to recognise that it is impossible to produce in the housing conditions of to-day workers who can successfully compete in the world's markets of to-morrow. The proposals which I am submitting are real Capitalism—an attempt to patch up in the interests of humanity, a capitalist ordered society. (*Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 174, June 3rd, 1924.)

Fellow workers, you voted for Capitalism either avowed or masquerading as "Labour." Now, in order that you may be made more efficient workers to compete for your masters' markets, they will "patch



you up," giving you "real Capitalism" for "the sake of their pockets."

\* \* \*

#### THE LABOUR PARTY'S "SOCIALISM."

Many years of study had overwhelmingly convinced him that in the gradual application of Socialist Principles lay the future hope of the world. . . . The police force, Courts of Justice, the army and navy, and our civil administration were Socialist and collective institutions (Oswald Mosley, *Manchester Guardian*, May 6th, 1924).

Some hope! No wonder Ramsay MacDonald welcomed this recruit to "Socialism," whose years of study convinced him that Socialism would be a sort of international police force. Definitions, as such, can have little bearing on Socialism as a science, but even a shilling Capitalist dictionary gets nearer than our "overwhelmed" student. Cassell's pocket edition says:—

Socialism is the theory that the materials from which labour produces wealth should be the property of the community.

And providing the "community" be the whole people we agree. To-day we live in Capitalist society, in which those materials are the property of Capitalists, including, of course, the form into which the workers' industry has changed such materials, i.e., railways, machinery, warehouses, etc. Such wealth is called Capital, and is used to exploit the workers for profit. An analysis of the above mentioned institutions will show their primary purpose to be the continuance of that exploitation, and whether it takes the collective form of the trust, the combine, or nationalisation as in the Post Office, Capitalism it remains, and it is indeed in such forms that we see the present system in its highest form of Capitalist ownership. There is no gradual transition to Socialism within the present system. We claim that all the industrial forms of to-day are ripe for social change BUT for the understanding of a majority of the workers. Only social revolution can bring that change and as the Labour Party stand as "a bulwark against revolution" (L.P. Manifesto. Oct. 24, 1922, General Election), they are anti-Socialists.

\* \* \*

#### ADVERTISING GOD.

The suggestion that advertising should be applied to popularise religion was discussed by Father Knox, who preached at Westminster Cathedral yesterday, his subject being, "Truth in

Advertising," the slogan of the Advertising Convention (*Morning Post*, July 14th, 1924.)

The subordination of art, literature, drama, etc., to the mercenary requirements of capitalism has long been a recognised fact. The artist must embody his art in the poster of the adulterated provisions purveyor, the journalist must meet the mentality of a war-mad world, or the ethics and ideas of our masters' so-called peace, the cinema star must in devious ways serve up the carefully prepared and censored material that portrays working-class poverty as incidental and romantic. The scientist, the priest, all must, if they would bid for Capitalist patronage, bring their services to the buyers. Small wonder that the awakening of the workers alarms the religionists, and suggests to them the methods of the soap boiler, or the medicinal quack. The ever increasing number of workers who despise the promise of a heavenly reward in a world in which they provide material comfort for an idle few, drives religion to the last ditch. It is as Marx says, "The opium of the people." Socialism is its antidote.

MAC.

#### THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASS.

##### Can it be Improved under Capitalism.

According to the Tories, Liberals and Communists, the Labour Government have failed to show any initiative or ability in dealing with unemployment. The Labour Party pleads for time. Although it may be true that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," it is scarcely necessary for those who can use their brains to wait for the experiments of a Labour Government before passing judgment on them.

It is easy to take their reforms one by one and, examining them in the light of reason, see for ourselves exactly how much they are worth. It is doubtful whether all their supposed remedies can ever stop the increase of unemployment. They are more likely to achieve the reverse.

Such palliatives as afforestation, nationalisation and more economical use of coal, together with others that make for greater efficiency, while they may increase employment in their initial stages, will obviously become responsible for more unemployment as they become effective.

Palliatives like the Capital Levy—if they do what the Labour leaders surreptitiously tell the workers they will: take from the rich and give to the poor—will be resisted by the Capitalists to the last. The advocates of the Capital Levy, Labour and Liberal, however, have yet to prove that it would benefit the workers. Their next job is to convert the employing class.

For many years Labour leaders have urged the necessity of higher wages both from the employers' and the workers' view-points. Mr. J. A. Hobson, in the *New Leader*, June 20, declares that the remedy for unemployment is along this line. "All wealth not required as new capital, if spent, would give full employment. The workers must have wages sufficiently high to buy up the goods they produce when fully employed."

Most workers would willingly agree; but, unfortunately, Mr. Hobson does not tell us how to obtain such wages. There is not the ghost of a suggestion throughout the article whether the workers should strike for them, or whether the employers should freely give, after recognising the probability of big returns. He simply ignores these questions and merely tells us that if everybody had enough money to buy all they wanted after working, unemployment would vanish. He says, for instance:—

It is not true, as is sometimes urged, that there does not exist at any time enough purchasing power to buy and consume everything that is, or can be produced. For everything produced belongs to somebody, that is to say, somebody has the right to take and consume it, or its equivalent in other sorts of wealth. If everybody went on using all the income he received in purchasing consumable goods and services, as fast as possible, there would be no unemployment. But there would also be no provision for industrial enlargement to meet the rising demands of an increasing population.

Now, the workers spend practically all their income on necessities. The Capitalists, in their various concerns, set on one side the sums necessary for replacement and enlargement before declaring dividends, or calling for new capital. If they live up to their incomes, or invest a portion as new capital, matters but little, it is spent anyway; and spent "as fast as possible" and capital is always forthcoming for any concerns that promise dividends.

In spite of all this spending, wealth that cannot be used as capital increases in quantity in the hands of the employing class.

Mr. Hobson knows this quite well, for he says:—

A great deal of wealth cannot get produced because, if it were produced, it could not get consumed. Why? Because there is not enough purchasing power in the possession of those who would desire to consume these goods.

A relatively small section of the working-class with modern methods and machinery, working at full pressure, can choke the world's markets in a very short time. Who is to buy the goods? If the Capitalists buy them in order to keep the workers employed their action would be no more stupid than paying extra wages that their workers might buy them. From their point of view it would be more sensible to increase the dole.

If Mr. Hobson wishes to deal with unemployment, he must take things as he finds them. There is no escaping the fact that the employers, as a class, are solely concerned with preserving their present domination over the workers for the purpose of continuing their exploitation. Higher wages would undoubtedly temporarily improve conditions for the workers, but how are they to get them? Capitalists are too careful to allow Mr. Hobson to persuade them that the payment of higher wages would bring them more business. They are clever enough to stop production, or ease up, at the first signs of congestion. But they have not yet arrived at a stage where they can eliminate all competition and fix prices and wages at a level which would guarantee to them a definite proportion of the wealth produced. If they ever arrive at such a stage it is obvious that high or low wages will mean nothing to the workers because prices could be adjusted to any level in accordance with the old standard of living.

There is no form of industrial organisation that could raise wages to the level Mr. Hobson's ideas would require. The employing class will only raise wages under pressure or necessity: pressure from the workers—where they have the power—or the indisputable necessity of raising the standard of living to produce greater efficiency. For these reasons Mr. Hobson's remedy is impossible of application and, therefore, scarcely worthy of discussion in other respects. With every reform, brought to their notice by politicians of every school, the worker should always ask himself the question: will it work?

F. F.



## COMMON NONSENSE ABOUT SOCIALISM.

"The Common Sense of Socialism,"  
Alban Gordon. Labour Publishing Co.  
120 pages. 1/-.

This book is written for the purpose of winning the support of the "Middle and well-to-do classes" for the programme of the Labour Party. The author explains that his party "stands for Socialism" . . . but not now! They "totally deny its practicability either now or for generations to come" (94), but if the vulgar mob will be patient they may see Capitalism at an end "possibly a century or more ahead" (65). For the present Mr. Gordon has some suggestions to make for the better running of the Capitalist system and, incidentally, for the improvement of the sad lot of the Capitalist class. There may even be some crumbs for the workers if they are humble, and will duly observe the gulf between them and the "intellectuals" who are going to "control" at suitably attractive salaries.

Mr. Gordon is one of those "Socialists" whose fear of the workers is much greater than their hatred of Capitalism, and his anxiety not to offend members of the exploiting class leads him into some curious assertions. Communism he loathes because of its advocacy of violence, and Pacifism, the refusal to advocate violence, he also loathes, but does not say why.

In re-stating the simple economic case against Capitalism he is good. He describes clearly, though without originality, the poverty and wretchedness the system provides for the great majority. He shows its chaotic inefficiency as a wealth-producing, as distinct from a profit-producing system, and illustrates the parasitic nature of the propertied class.

He quotes a useful exposure of the odious intensified slavery which Ford disguises as philanthropy:—

Men called "advisers" visit the men's homes and question them as to how they spend their wages. Ford has fixed the amount out of their wages that he thinks they should spend and save. He provides them with what his experts tell him is the most hygienic food for them to eat, and the best clothes for them to wear. . . . There is no more romance or real independence in the lives of the 55,000 men employed in the factories than in that of a thorough-bred Jersey cow. (83). But when he leaves the description of facts

and attempts to supply remedies and state principles he is merely muddled.

He is emphatic that "Socialism is NOT the 'have nots' versus the 'haves,'" and that it "does not propose to confiscate private property" (14), yet he recognises that "private ownership makes the rich richer and the poor poorer," that "poverty is the direct logical outcome of Capitalism" (24) and that "two-thirds of the annual income . . . goes to the small class of the rich" (22). He will not face the fact that the workers cannot obtain the whole of the annual income without depriving the idle class of the share they now receive, and that unless they do they will continue to be exploited. It is plain that the "haves" will resist and the "have-nots" will have to compel.

He repudiates Marx and the idea of a class war (pp. 89 and 59) and is evidently quite unaware that the conflict which arises from the private ownership of the means of production is the class war. For on page 29 he writes:—

Such disputes (strikes) are an inherent feature of the capitalist system in which "capital" and "labour" are enemies instead of allies. So long as we permit the private ownership of capital by the few, so long will antagonism and private warfare as to the terms on which its owners will permit its use be the rule rather than the exception.

His chief remedy is Nationalisation, and like most of his fellow advocates, he fails to point to any single advantage nationalisation has to offer the working class. Railway nationalisation will, it is true, permit of greater economy and efficiency; but he omits to remind his readers of the 50,000 railwaymen dismissed between 1921 and 1923 owing to working economies, in spite of an increase in the volume of traffic. (J. H. Thomas, *Daily Chronicle*, November 17, 1923.) Men are still being dismissed and more will follow if and when unified State Ownership is introduced. Nationalisation of the mines and electrification schemes will save 55 million tons of coal per annum, but nothing is said as to the fate of thousands of miners who will lose their chance of employment. It is interesting to notice that men are still being discharged from Woolwich Arsenal, a State concern.

His solution for unemployment is an intensive campaign for the sale of British goods in the Colonies or foreign countries

(62) quite oblivious of the fact that it was precisely in order to extend foreign trade that the last war was fought. The problem was not solved either for victors or vanquished, and while Gordon babbles of capturing markets by the peaceful penetration of commercial travellers, his "anti-violence" party in office are busy strengthening the Navy and expanding the Air Force for the anticipated conflict with some other market snatchers.

He himself unconsciously damns the case for Nationalisation when he joyfully records that the Sankey Report urging Nationalisation of the Mines was the work of a body which

Included besides a well-known Judge, a steel manufacturer, Mr. (now Sir Arthur) Balfour, an engineer, Sir A. Duckham, and a shipowner, Sir Thomas Roydon, Bt. (96).

He adds that it "was urged upon the Coal Commission of 1919 by the colliery owners as well as the miners' representatives."

Does anyone suppose that those members and representatives of the employing class want nationalisation because it will benefit the workers? They want it because it will benefit themselves, just as before the war the oil magnates of Germany were financing a Social Democratic agitation for the nationalising of the oil refining and distributing industry. Only last month a firm of Stockbrokers, Messrs. Arthur Wheeler & Co., of Leicester, were urging upon their clients the desirability of mine nationalisation from their point of view as shareholders. Their words are instructive:—

A short time ago, in conversation, a number of influential colliery proprietors brought up this question. . . . They were agreed that supposing it became practically possible, it would be the best thing possible for themselves. They actually looked forward to its realisation.

Again and again past experience proves that when a Government department enters into a business agreement with private traders, the latter invariably get the best of the bargain. We, therefore, can assume the same would result if and when the Government took over the control of our mining industry.

Colliery shareholders would receive from the purchaser (i.e., the State) new stock in place of their original holdings. The industry would be guaranteed by the whole taxable capacity of the nation. Hence the new stock would be of the same nature as all gilt-edged stocks, with both capital and interest a Government obligation. The risks of labour troubles and foreign competition would be taken from the present shareholders and placed on the broad back of the State. This, in the main, is the reason why colliery proprietors do not fear nationalisation.

Mr. Alban Gordon and the Labour Party wish to earn the confidence of the shareholding class, but that they can do only by sacrificing the interests of the workers.

Another joy they have in store for the property owner is the abolition of rates by the extension of municipal trade (116).

The book is a quite readable and interesting account of the Labour Party's plans for salvaging Capitalism, but in spite of its title it has nothing to offer the seeker after Socialist knowledge. The author has the usual superiority of the "intellectual" offering to teach the "lower orders," and his indifference to principles and his preference for everyday superficialities, are well illustrated by his note on Marx's "Capital" that it is "The classic which everyone quotes but no-one reads." Had he read this and other serious works by scientific thinkers he might have realised that what he seems to dismiss as the "earlier statements of Socialism" are in fact indispensable to the student. He would at least have avoided being 20 years out in his statement of the date of "Capital." H.

## CAPITALIST EDUCATION.

As the employer is only interested in the worker as a factor in production, as an economic category he is indifferent to all else about the worker save his cheapness, efficiency and docility. Anything that tends to weaken or decrease these qualities naturally meets with the determined opposition of the Capitalist class, while all that makes the worker cheaper, more productive and more contented with his lot as a wage-slave is eagerly welcomed and actively supported.

Consider, in the light of these facts, the compulsory "education" to which all workers are subjected. It is a vital necessity of modern production and arises from two essential needs of the system: on the one hand the urgent call for a productive class able to read, write and calculate and with a general understanding of mechanical causation; on the other hand the necessity of this working class being trained in the ethics, economies and other ideas of the Capitalist.

A circular on education was recently drawn up by that stronghold of English Capitalism—The Federation of British In-



dustries—which holds in its company the wealthiest and most powerful of the bourgeoisie of the country.

Referring to this circular Mr. J. L. Paton, High Master of the Manchester Grammar School, said in his address on education to Manchester business men:—

The Federation had suggested that all that was needed was a system of selection by which some children would go to industry and some would be "creamed off." The Federation further said that to give further education, even part time, after the age of fourteen was a waste of money, and it strongly advised that in selecting children for higher education care should be taken (as in India) that higher education should not raise a large class of people whose education was unsuitable for the work they would eventually do.

They were, Mr. Paton commented, to be educated, in fact, as instruments of production; the potter for his pots, the spinner for his cotton. The workman was a tool who happened to be animated (*Manchester Guardian*, June 24th, 1924).

Mr. Paton went on to criticise the views of the F.B.I. and from the Capitalist point of view his remarks were quite to the point. Such a narrowly industrial view of the correct education for wage-workers is obsolete and even dangerous. It only takes into account the economic factors of cheapness and efficiency. But the other vital factor—the docility of the slave class—is of at least equal importance at all times and, in a period of rapid social change and turmoil, is perhaps even more valuable. Hence Mr. Paton—with, of course, much humanitarian garnish—says:—

The Federation of British Industries had made up their minds, and they had made them up wrong. Here was a working man, unskilled perhaps; it was not necessary to be very well educated to do unskilled work. But he was a husband, and that was a skilled job, a father, a citizen, an Englishman, and a child of God. (*Ibid*).

The worker then is to be given lessons in physiology to enable him to produce a strong, healthy progeny of slaves, Capitalist economics and sociology to make of him a contented "citizen" and upholder of the existing order, patriotic dope and distorted "history" to make him ready and willing to go to the bloody battlefield on behalf of the Capitalist State and last and in these days least, barbaric myths from the Ancient Hebrew to cloud his mind and turn his thoughts towards the imaginary world to come and away from the pressing ever present evils and problems here at hand and all around him.

R. W. H.

## DEBATES AND THE I.L.P.

We have recently been asked why we do not arrange a debate with the I.L.P., as branches of that organisation have both issued challenges and accepted them. As, however, it appeared that the I.L.P. headquarters were unwilling to endorse these challenges we approached them directly. Below is the reply of Mr. Fenner Brockway:—

1st July, 1924.

Dear Sir,

We have your letter and do not think that any useful purpose can be served by a debate which you suggest, and accordingly regret that we cannot accept your proposal.

Sincerely yours,  
A. FENNER BROCKWAY.

Secretary.

He does not explain why no useful purpose would be served, but it is not difficult to suggest an explanation. I.L.P. Head Office is no doubt occupied with other matters. On the one hand the staff have just put in an impudent claim for trade union rates of pay, and on the other Mr. Brockway must be fully engaged defending and explaining away to the rank and file the actions of I.L.P. M.P.'s in the Government and in the House. There are limits to everything, even possibly to the gullibility of the members of the I.L.P. and the adaptability of the non-conformist conscience.

With his subtlety taxed to the utmost trying to reconcile Pacifism with more cruisers, the enlarged Air Force, bombs in Irak, and shooting strikers in India, Mr. Brockway naturally has no time for Socialism; not even to oppose it in debate.

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A.S.C./205/22:7:24

## THE INDUSTRIAL CRISIS AND ITS CAUSE.

"It is considered likely that unemployment will become a menace again next winter, as it was in the winter of 1921, unless industry brisks up meanwhile. As a matter of fact, grave doubts are being expressed as to whether periods of acute unemployment may not in future be as much a part of the economic system of the United States as they are in other industrial countries. It is pointed out that the increase in producing equipment has almost reached the point where it is a hindrance rather than a help to an even flow of prosperity. The steel plants of the country and the shoe industries can produce twice as much output as the country can consume.

Similarly, textile mills, automobile factories, and various other branches of industry, have an output capacity far beyond the country's powers of consumption. To keep these various industries going at maximum rates it is realised that considerable export outlets, which are at present not in evidence, would be necessary, and as the progress of manufacturing develops in other countries less industrialised than the United States is at present it is likely that there will be still less demand for the surplus products of American factories. This can only result eventually in a considerable lowering of the American standard of living, now reputed to be the highest in the world."—The American Correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian*. (July 10, 1924.)

## MARX ON FREE TRADE.

(Continued from June "S.S.")

In 1829 there were, in Manchester, 1,088 cotton spinners employed in 36 factories. In 1841 there were but 448, and they tended 55,353 more spindles than the 1,088 spinners did in 1829. If manual labour had increased in the same proportion as productive force the number of spinners ought to have risen to 1,848; improved machinery had, therefore, deprived 1,100 workers of employment.

We know beforehand the reply of the economists—the people thus thrown out of work will find other kinds of employment. Dr. Bowring did not fail to reproduce this argument at the Congress of Economists.

But neither did he fail to refute himself. In 1833, Dr. Bowring made a speech in the House of Commons upon the 50,000 hand-loom weavers of London who have been starving without being able to find that new kind of employment which the Free Traders hold out to them in the distance. I will give the most striking portion of this speech of Mr. Bowring:—

"The misery of the hand-loom weavers," he says, "is the inevitable fate of all kinds of labour which are easily acquired, and which may, at any moment, be replaced by less costly means. As in these cases competition amongst the workpeople is very great, the slightest falling-off in demand brings on a crisis. The hand-loom weavers are, in a certain sense, placed on the verge of human existence. One step further, and that existence becomes impossible. The slightest shock is sufficient to throw them on the road to ruin. By more and more superseding manual labour, the progress of mechanical science must result, during the period of transition, in much temporary suffering. National well-being cannot be bought except at the price of some individual evils. The advance of industry is achieved at the expense of those who lag behind, and of all discoveries that of the power-loom weighs most heavily upon the hand-loom weavers. In a great many articles formerly made by hand, the weaver has been completely ousted; but he is sure to be beaten in a good many more stuffs that are now made by hand."

Further on he says:—

"I hold in my hand a correspondence of the Governor-General with the East India Company. This correspondence is concerning the weavers of the Dacca district. The Governor says in his letter: 'A few years ago the East India Company received from six to eight million pieces of calico woven upon the looms of the country. The demand fell off gradually and was reduced to about a million pieces. At this moment it has almost entirely ceased. Moreover, in 1800, North America received from India nearly 800,000 pieces of cotton goods. In 1830 it did not take even 4,000. Finally, in 1800, a million of pieces were shipped for Portugal; in 1830 Portugal did not receive above 20,000.'

"The reports on the distress of the Indian weavers are terrible. And what is the origin of that distress? The presence on the market of English manufactures, the production of the same article by means of the power-loom. A great number of the weavers died of starvation; the remainder has gone over to other employment, and chiefly to field labour. Not to be able to change employment amounted to a sentence of death. And at this moment the Dacca district is crammed with English yarns and piece goods. The Dacca muslin, renowned all over the world for its beauty and firm texture, has also been eclipsed by the competition of English machinery. In the whole history of commerce, it would perhaps be difficult to find suffering equal to what these whole classes in India had to submit to."

(To be continued).



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions every Wednesday at 8.45 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at The Arcadians, 42, Amhurst-rd., Hackney Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., T. Travis, 27, Arthur Street, Cobridge, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., A. L. Myerson, 28, Brunswick St., Hightown, Manchester. Branch meets Clarion Café, Market St., 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month, at 8.30 p.m.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., W. A. Griffin, 64, Park-rd., Merton, S.W.19. Branch meets at "The Royal Six Bells," High-st., Merton, S.W., Thursday, 8 p.m. Public invited.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 12, High Cross road, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to A. J. Godfrey, 30, Waverley road, Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Noel Park School, N.22.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS****LONDON DISTRICT.**

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 6 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.  
Leytonstone, The Green Man, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 3 p.m.

**Mondays:** Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Friday:** Stratford, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Tooting, Church Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Baths), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Edmonton, The Green, 8 p.m.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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## THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ANARCHISM and SOCIALISM

### **Idealism and Materialism.**

The confusion in people's minds about anarchism and Socialism continually calls for a discussion of the subject. Whilst to many capitalists they are identical, to others Anarchism is the noblest ideal ever inspiring the minds of men, and Socialism is considered as "the coming slavery." Many so-called Socialists styling themselves "advanced," say that Anarchism is the highest expression of Socialism. They say that we are on the same road. That is true. But we are travelling in opposite directions. The Socialist is going *forward* along the road on which the human race has evolved. The Anarchist goes *backward* to individualism and petty enterprise. Is that clear?

Socialism is not the result of schemes and dreams. It is but a convenient name for the stage in social evolution made possible and inevitable by the economic tendencies of our time. It is not built up out of vain yearnings and longings for liberty, equality and fraternity. It seeks to adapt the methods of owning and enjoying wealth to the co-operative system of production already reached by economic advance.

It is hard to define Anarchism. Each Anarchist claims to be a law unto himself. The essential feature, however, is the demand for absolute liberty. (See Kropotkin's *Conquest of Bread*.) Anarchists claim that the State, Law and Authority were invented by the rich to rob the poor. They believe in free agreement by groups to live in their own way. They denounce majority rule, representation, voting, and many other

methods which the human race evolved in their upward march and struggle for existence. Anarchists criticise the present system and also Socialism from the standpoint of a Utopian dreaming of a perfect society. In their wild tirades against Law and State they ignore the place these institutions have in social development.

### **The Lessons of Evolution.**

Free agreement amongst a number of people is useful, but absolute individual liberty is impossible. To reject the necessity for majority rule under all conditions is ridiculous.

Humanity has to live. The necessities of life must be continuously produced or we starve. Anarchist ideas of waiting till men and women in local groups come to a complete agreement about production and distribution will cause starvation and misery @ the meantime.

The hopes of Anarchists, sincere and high though they may be, ignore the past results and present trend of economic life. Society advanced out of the primitive condition of savage man by combination; by association in their contest with nature and animal. From a tool-less animal man progressed step by step until the power to control natural forces gave him a larger, wider vision and impelled him to discover institutions to regulate and harmonise social life. The steady improvement in tools and association gave men the power to feed, clothe and house vast societies. Earlier, simpler, localised methods could not do this. Association in working the huge machinery and



operating large factories, running railroads and sailing ships inevitably increased the wealth of the world. Modern machinery and centralised production is an advance. Let Anarchists deny it. Whilst this co-operatively worked industry is under individual and class ownership it breeds poverty among plenty. Socialists, therefore, seek to commonly own and democratically control that which the workers commonly produce. Is that plain?

#### The Great Divide.

Anarchists reject democratic control of the instruments of wealth. Some of them believe in individual ownership, others hold to common possession. They all demand, nevertheless, that the individual should control. How can the instruments of production commonly owned be individually controlled? Anarchists are silent on this point. Free agreement and absolute individual liberty cannot provide for the unceasing daily necessities of an international population, always growing.

Socialists study history and find that the material conditions, the forces used in social production, the natural and social surroundings of the population, form the foundation for the life of the people. Methods of ownership, exchange and distribution, depend upon the kind of material conditions existing. Ways of government, states of law, and all the political and civil regulations of humanity follow from the industrial habits and economic institutions of men. To denounce the State, the Law, and the social institutions because they do not fit in with some ideal principle is good—for the poet. But it does not help to change society.

The Socialist knows that many things called "bad," and most institutions called "evil," once served society as methods of advance. Anarchists from Stirner to Goldman indict the entire past of the human race as wrong, forgetful of the truth of evolution that what is "bad" and useless now was "good" and useful at some previous time. The materialistic explanation of history involves the truth that a given system of production leads to a definite and corresponding method of distribution and ownership. Hence, the common ownership of the resources of life cannot be controlled by varying and conflicting individuals at their own sweet will, but must be democratically

controlled by and in the interest of the whole working population. In social and therefore important matters the majority must decide if all do not agree.

#### The Philosophy of Destruction.

Such a Utopian ideal as Anarchism leads to peculiar results. If majority rule is wrong in principle, the overthrow of the few (the owners) by the majority (the workers) is also wrong. So we are condemned to wait till the whole society, parasites and producers alike, can reach a common mutual agreement. What an Anarchist farce! The sweet and beautiful expressions of freedom running through the pages of idealists sway the sentimental man and woman. Sentiment is a fine thing. But it is no substitute for knowledge. Sentiment by itself is a fine ally of our masters, for it does not need education and study. And it is used by the so-called patriots and clergy to chain us to the slavery of to-day.

"The State and Government must be immediately abolished," Anarchists say. They accuse Socialists of believing in these institutions. Socialists are directly opposed to every agency of privilege and every office of domination. But unlike the Anarchists we realise that a central authority arose when the division of labour took place and it filled a useful function in the life of primitive but progressing society. The administration of affairs and the regulation of civil life was its chief function. Private property and class division gave rise to a State machine controlled by each ruling section in turn—chattel slave owner, patriarchal lord, feudal baron, or industrial capitalist. Knowing how these institutions have grown out of and adapted themselves to each period of society, we do not demand their instant abolition. They are part of the existing society and to remove them we must change the economic and social system as a whole. The uprising of Anarchists supported by Madame Breshkovsky, Peter Kropotkin, and others in Russia, demanded the abolition of government—at a time when centralised control and nationwide action could alone save the suffering workers from starvation and slaughter by the advancing bourgeoisie. Anarchists being Utopians and idealists believe they can cut off parts of this system as they think fit. They do not realise that the modern

State, Law, Authority, Police and Punishment are but the results of class rule and are integral parts of a rotten system. Rotten because it is over-ripe economically.

#### Anarchism and Democracy.

Anarchists pour their bitter venom upon every form of representation, voting, delegation, etc. Blind to the fact (as Morgan shows of the Iroquois tribes) that it took ages for the human race to progress to these surer, safer, and advanced methods of conducting social life. They had a function and have one yet. Anarchists say an individual should be the master of his life and no one can represent him. This is nonsense. Only little, loose groups could live in this way, and even they would soon expediently forget their principles. A great population cannot carry on a society by the whole population meeting together to argue and discuss until everybody agrees. In the meantime men must live. Representation is therefore a good servant.

Democracy is not what Anarchists and capitalists imagine. It means more than holding up hands or saying "Aye!" To open all channels of knowledge and information, to give everyone leisure and a chance to understand and learn of the facts of life, to offer to all the advancement modern "democracy" keeps for a few—this is the social and political expression of democracy. When men vote and discuss and delegate their opinions under these conditions they will know what they are doing. And then, if all do not agree, social matters can be decided by majorities until the minority convinces the majority.

#### The Intellectuals.

Emma Goldman in her book on "Anarchism and Other Essays" says the majority is always wrong. The Anarchists, therefore, will either rule with a minority or be wrong if they become a majority. She further states the great mass of the people never were and never will be the ones to progress. Just the intellectual few. Such views mean that the great body of the people will depend upon the kindness and wisdom of the Anarchist intellectuals to guide and mother us. All Anarchists hold to that opinion. Socialists, however, understand that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself. Unless we can convince and convert the majority of workers, Socialism is an

idle dream. If you bring about a revolution with an ignorant, uninformed or hostile working class, defeat sooner or later faces you. Judge, too, the value of these self-styled intellectuals by their gymnastics on the war.

Kropotkin in Russia, Herve and Benj. R. Tucker in France, Clarence Darrow in America, Owen in England, are examples of the ease with which critics of the common herd join with it to become popular.

#### Anarchism Kills Organisation.

These reactionary ideas follow from their conception of the all-importance of individuals. They believe society is just a collection of individuals, not an organic whole as Socialists and all scientists understand. Many Anarchists reason from this that the removal of certain individuals will change conditions. Propaganda by deed follows from their false sociology. The absolute liberty of the individual and supremacy of the ego kills the spirit of organisation. The workers cannot be organised unless the give-and-take policy of democracy is used. The individual will must express itself through the common will. Anarchists, therefore, have never attempted to organise the working class. They shout general strike and insurrection without teaching the masses the economics and history of the system. The fallacy of the general strike rests upon the fact of the workers being propertyless and faced with starvation if they all leave work and the tools in the masters' hands. Their objection to political organisation is based upon the supposed failure of political action in the past. But the toilers have never used the power of politics in their own interest. The chief reason why men become Anarchists is the sickening fraud and failure of those compromising and reforming parties which pose as Socialist. The real science and policy of the teachings of Marx and Engels have never been answered by Anarchists. They waste their time fighting shadows and attacking effects, not causes. Anarchism appeals to sentiment and needs little thought or study to succumb to its plausible appeal.

J. O. L.

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## A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

(Continued from June S.S.)

The somewhat lengthy quotation from Marx's "Capital" together with one taken from "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," which were given in the previous article, show how utterly false is the view that Marx took no account of ideas as a factor in social change. Whilst we have no desire to multiply examples, we think it necessary to give one more quotation upon this point.

In the form of an appendix to Engel's work on Feuerbach, there are several extracts taken from the writings of Marx concerning the materialistic philosophy of Feuerbach and others. In one of these extracts Marx says:—

"The materialistic doctrine that men are the products of conditions and education—different men, therefore, the products of other conditions and changed education—forgets that circumstances may be altered by men and that the educator has himself to be educated."

So we could continue to pile up the evidence from the writings of both Marx and Engels to prove how they realised and asserted the importance of man's ideas as an active participant in historical development.

Any theory of history which excluded man's ideas from the part they play in social development would scarcely deserve serious consideration. For, in grappling with the forces of nature to sustain himself "man makes his own history" inasmuch as the will to live spurs him on to devise ways and means of subduing his natural surroundings to meet his needs and desires.

As we have already indicated, the way in which man moulds his environment in harmony with his requirements is by the making and using of tools, and this fact alone implies that man applies his intelligence to his surroundings.

The historical development of human society is not to be understood as though it were an automatic process in which human action plays no part, for historical develop-

ment can only take place through human actions, and only from this point of view is our theory of history to be understood.

Our view of historical development, instead of implying fatalism, implies a scientific determinism which sees the principle of causation, as it applies throughout nature, applying to human thought and conduct—which in turn is by no means passive in historical happenings.

Not only avowed opponents have interpreted the materialist conception of history as though it regarded men like so many "marionettes, whose threads are held and moved no longer by Providence but by economic categories," but also many who have styled themselves "Marxists" have done likewise. The writer has heard it said by certain "Marxists" who, under the impression that they are interpreting the materialist conception aright, that economic development alone would suffice to effect the change in the form of society from the Capitalist to the Socialist form. That whether we desired it or not Socialism would emerge through economic development quite independently of our action.

Like the celebrated gentleman who exchanged the errors of the Church of Rome for those of the Church of England, such people are, instead of worshipping God, worshipping "economic development" without understanding its meaning.

Obviously, whether we view history from the point of view of economic development alone, or from the standpoint of the actual change in the form of society, we must logically view it as a process wherein the human mind has, in a certain sense, a positive influence. And here a word about mind. "Man," says Dietzgen, "does not think originally because he wants to, but because he must," but though Dietzgen is here speaking of ideas that are formed instinctively, involuntarily, nevertheless it is equally true of ideas that are formed consciously. For, in order to live man must apply his mind in various directions as the problems of his surroundings confront him.

When we speak of mind we have not the same idea in view as that of the theologians and mystics of all shades of thought, who would have us believe that mind is "a thing in itself" which can exist apart from the body. Mind apart from body nobody ever

saw or is ever likely to see. "Mind" is a term used to denote the working process of the brain—the sum-total of ideas as they are generated and combined in the brain—through the medium of our sense organs—the organs of touch, taste, hearing, smell and sight. Mind, therefore, is not a thing in the sense that it can be grasped by the hand or be seen by the aid of a microscope, but is, as indicated above, an expression or manifestation of generalised ideas which arise from the impressions made upon the brain by "the realities of the outer world."

The materialist view of mind is a determinist view, which sees, in line with the findings of modern psychology, "that all mental phenomena are causally dependent upon physical phenomena." Ideas do not descend upon us from heaven, or arise in our heads independently of material causes, but are the result of past and present material conditions. Thus it will be gathered that the "mind" is a reflector, and since the things reflected are those of man's environment, the nature or character of the environment determines our ideas.

As the environment undergoes change, through the development of tools, fresh conditions are created which form the material for fresh ideas, and with the increasing complexity of the environment newer wants and desires emerge as a consequence. Thus it is that man is more or less compelled to turn his mind in the direction of inventing and improving the tools of production. It is then the changes in the environment wrought by the changes in the methods employed to procure the means of living which form the driving force behind the changes in ideas. The truth of the dependence of the changes in ideas upon external forces may be seen in the fact of the tendency of ideas to remain stationary as in the case of a slowly developing environment, and in the case of tradition. The view has been put in another way as follows:—

Progress must not be looked upon as something immanent in man. What is immanent in man is rather a tremendous mental laziness which confronts all novelty with hostility. In order to conquer this inherent laziness, something from without must enter into him which shall draw him forcibly out of his customary existence, and this something is nothing supernatural but quite palpable—it is nothing else but a forced or voluntary change of environment.—(Muller-Lyer, History of Social Development.)

And a very superficial examination of

society will show that changing economic forces so change the environment that they are the greatest factor in changing ideas.

So far we have emphasised the fact of human action along economic lines for the reason that economic needs are primary. Obviously, we must first satisfy these before we are able to turn our thought in other directions, the claims of the "lofty idealists" notwithstanding. And this applies not only to our individual existence, but also to the existence of human society as a whole. But though this is so, no Marxist would assert that the entire activities of mankind are to be explained on purely economic grounds.

"Nobody," says Kautsky, "would declare the sexual passion to be an economic motive," even though "the alteration in the annual number of marriages is called forth by changes in the economic situation." All that Marx and Engels claimed for historical materialism was that the economic development is the dominant factor of historical development. "More than this," says Engels, neither Marx nor I ever asserted."

Engels has pointed out that Marx and he were partly responsible for some of their supporters laying more stress on the economic side than it deserved. But he explains that it was essential for Marx and himself to emphasise the economic factor in order to meet the attacks of their opponents who had disputed their view of history, and further, that they did not have the time, place or opportunity to let the other factors get their full recognition. The evidence for this explanation by Engels is to be found in the introduction to his work on "Feuerbach. The roots of the Socialist Philosophy."

So far we have omitted, for the purpose of simplification, one very important fact which our view of history reveals quite clearly from the facts of history itself, namely, that with the exception of that early stage of human society when a crude form of communism prevailed, the history of society is largely made up of a series of class struggles, based upon conflicting economic interests. Thus the upward march of mankind from savagery to civilisation has not alone been composed of a struggle between man and external nature, but has also been composed of struggles between man and man carried on along lines of



class interests. This aspect of the subject will be dealt with in the continuation of this sketch.

R. REYNOLDS.

(To be continued.)

## A LORD DISCOVERS THE REAL KARL MARX.

One does not frequently discover in the books and articles written about Marx by his opponents any genuine attempt to impart to the reader an adequate idea of the contents of Marx's works. "The Real Karl Marx" (an article by Lord Riddell in *John O' London's Weekly*, July 26, 1924) merits some consideration, however, for, as a travesty of Marx's teachings, it is rather more absurd than the ordinary bourgeois production.

The purpose of this article is not to discuss Lord Riddell's method of misrepresentation, but to point out a few slips made by him in his application of that method. In the first place it should be noted that where Lord Riddell falls in the cart (if one may use a proletarian expression in writing of a bourgeois) is in his choice of a victim. It is common knowledge among Socialists that Marx and Engels never did appear particularly well in the "rôle" of victims of misrepresentation of the type now under review. Both of them had a peculiar habit of replying to their critics' misrepresentations—sometimes half a century or more before those misrepresentations were made.

A few examples will serve to show wherein "The Real Karl Marx" of Lord Riddell differs from Marx. Lord Riddell, discussing the history of Marx's ideas, writes as follows:—

Adam Smith laid down that labour is the source of all wealth and the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities ("Wealth of Nations," 1776). In 1817 Ricardo (1772-1823) published his "Political Economy," in which he stated that the worker receives as wages only so much as is required to furnish him with the necessities of life estimated according to the custom of the time.

Marx based his theories for the reconstruction of Society upon a narrow interpretation of these propositions.

Marx, in his critical notes on the Gotha Programme, says:

Labour is not the source of all wealth. Nature, no less than labour, is the source of use-values (and of these material wealth essentially consists); and labour is itself no more than a manifestation of a natural force, human labour-power.

Marx's work, "The Poverty of Philosophy," is itself a reply to the last sentence quoted from Lord Riddell's article, but the following passage from Engel's preface to that work may usefully be given here:

The above application of the theory of Ricardo, which shows to the workers that the totality of social production, which is their product, belongs to them because they are the only real producers, leads direct to Communism. But it is also, as Marx shows, false in force, economically speaking, because it is simply an application of morality to economy. According to the laws of bourgeois economy, the greater part of the product does not belong to the workers who have created it. If, then, we say, "That is unjust, it ought not to be," that has nothing whatever to do with economy; we are only stating that this economic fact is in contradiction to our moral sentiment. That is why Marx never based upon this his Communist conclusions, but rather upon the necessary overthrow, which is developing itself under our eyes every day, of the capitalist system of production."

A brief examination thus shows that Marx's alleged "narrow interpretation" is merely the product of Lord Riddell's imagination.

Elsewhere our critic refers to various matters which, he says, Marx's theory disregarded. He says: "It also disregarded the necessity of leadership in industry." Marx's reply to this may once more be quoted:

All combined labour on a large scale requires, more or less, a directing authority, in order to secure the harmonious working of the individual activities, and to perform the general functions that have their origin in the action of the combined organism, as distinguished from the action of its separate organs. A single violin player is his own conductor; an orchestra requires a separate one.

Further:

Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labour so soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, as such, begins, so now, he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workmen and groups of workmen, to a special kind of wage labourer. An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers), and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. The work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function.—*Capital*, Vol. 1, chapter 13.)

Lord Riddell, in the course of a pretence at a representation of what he calls Marx's theory, says: "The workers, however, become organised and develop class consciousness—viz., a recognition of their rights as

opposed to those of other classes." Marx certainly recognised the necessity for class-consciousness. But "rights"! How little use Marx's theory had for the recognition of rights is realised by anyone who has given any attention to his works. Especially in the already-mentioned Notes on the Gotha Programme does Marx deal with this matter. Discussing the expression "equal rights to the whole product of labour," occurring in that Programme, he shows how "Like all right, therefore, it is substantially an unequal right." Further on, too, he denounces the "endeavour to uproot the realistic conceptions which (after long labour) have been firmly implanted "in the minds of our members, and to replace them by ideological fustian about rights and all the rest of it."

It is possible here only to touch upon a very small proportion of Lord Riddell's mistakes. The following, however, must be given as his best attempt at concentrated misrepresentation:

The English edition of his chief work, *Capital*, was issued in 1886. In the preface his co-author, Frederick Engels, committed himself to the statement that British prosperity seemed to have run its course, that we were landed in "the slough of a permanent and chronic depression," and that the increase of population would shortly lead to a revolution.

What Engels did write, in his preface, was:

The decennial cycle of stagnation, prosperity, over-production and crisis, ever recurrent from 1825 to 1867, seems indeed to have run its course; but only to land us in the slough of despond of a permanent and chronic depression.—(*Capital*. Swan, Sonnenschein, Lowrey & Co., 1887.)

The real Engels is as quoted here, and the real riddle is: How did our critic manage to quote nearly a whole line of Engels' preface nearly correctly? As regards the statement, attributed to Engels, that "the increase of population would shortly lead to a revolution," it must be admitted that Lord Riddell here deals Engels a nasty blow, the only defence being that Engels did not make that statement.

Lord Riddell gives what purports to be, but most certainly is not, a description of Marx's materialist conception of history. What Lord Riddell does not know about this side of Marx's teachings is evidently well worth knowing. For of Marx he writes: "In 1845 he was expelled from Paris. After this he went to Brussels, where, in conjunction with Frederick

Engels, he planned a series of European revolutions to subvert the existing order." This is the best joke penned by Lord Riddell in his article. Revolutions planned by Marx and Engels! By those who had formulated the materialist conception of history, according to which the latter is a history of class struggles! By those who had maintained that "the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself"! If Lord Riddell's version is not a crude joke, then how admirable must have been the modesty of the author of "The Struggle of the Classes in France (1848—1850)."

A clue to the source of Lord Riddell's mistakes; to use a polite expression, may be found in another of his references to *Capital*. He remarks: "It is not exciting reading, but its teachings diluted and embellished have been spread in all civilised countries by devoted adherents." Whether or not *Capital* is exciting reading depends, of course, upon the reader. But if ever Lord Riddell should desire to become acquainted with the subject of his criticism it would still be of advantage to him to read Marx's works rather than his "teachings diluted and embellished" by devoted adherents of capitalism.

A. C. ANDERTON.

## LLOYD GEORGE ON THE LABOUR PARTY.

"The Labour Party had been built up on nationalisation, the capital levy, and a tax on individual enterprise and private property, and now that it was in power this same Labour Party was acting as if all its life it had been the only champion of individual enterprise and private property, and the sworn enemy of nationalisation of every sort and kind.

"The Labour Party was busy selling goods over the counter, and was doing a great trade, but it was not its own goods it was selling. A few were Tory goods; but most of them Liberal goods."—(Report of Oxford speech, *Daily Herald*, August 7.)

## "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION."

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**The Socialist Standard,**

SEPT.,



1924

**REPARATIONS OR REVOLUTION.****The World Situation.**

The scramble for the spoils of war has entered another stage. The Versailles Treaty arranged the division of the plunder but the Allies have been quarrelling about the "sharing out" process. So "experts" have been called in to advise methods for a quicker "delivery of the goods."

The working class has no interest in reparations or indemnities. The fight among the capitalists over these questions is an effort to relieve themselves of the financial cost of the slaughter which they engineered in 1914. The workers do not own property and therefore cannot pay for wars, and so the capitalists must fight it out between themselves as to how the bill can be paid. Behind the reparations question there is the ever present struggle for markets on the part of the world's capitalists, and this struggle is keener and more desperate than ever.

In spite of military victories and vastly increased territory the Allied Capitalists are faced with a world problem which they cannot solve. The productive power of labour and the use of improved machinery has greatly increased since the war, but the market has not expanded. Not only are the rival national capitalists unable to find

fresh markets, but the manufactured goods which once they could sell to "foreign buyers" are not wanted in countries now manufacturing for their own home market. Instead of exporting shoes to countries like Chile they are exporting shoe machinery.

Capitalist Governments like that of Herriot, Macdonald, etc., support a reparations policy in the hope of defeating the competition of Germany and so restoring the trade and commerce of the Allied Capitalist world. But each one of the Allied Nations capitalists are out to smash the competition of the other, and even with Germany "scrapped" the same problem and the same murderous struggle for markets and territory would go on. And in the rivalries and conflicts of the exploiters the workers have no concern. The workers' interest is to abolish the system under which they are robbed of the results of their labour.

**The Fraud of the Labour Party.**

The Labour Party on platforms and papers throughout the country declared that the Treaty of Versailles must go.

They said in their handbook for Labour Party speakers (Labour and the Peace Treaty): "The commitments of Labour to revision of the Treaty have steadily grown in definiteness and emphasis during the last four years. Not only is Labour committed to revision by the fact that the Treaties, both with Germany and Austria, are in plain violation of the principles it has so often expressed during the war, but it is committed also by repeated declarations, made since the terms of the Treaty and of the Covenant of the League of Nations (embodied in it) became known."

In complete defiance of election promises and literature the Labour Party have endorsed the Dawes Treaty which Macdonald defended and signed. Thus not only have the Labour Party supported the war, but now they assist the ruling class to reap the spoils.

After all their denunciation of the Versailles Treaty when in opposition, the Labour Party in office ignored their specious promises and promptly repudiated Arthur Henderson's election pledge at Burnley to revise the Versailles Treaty.

The Labour Government were praised by the Capitalist Press, specially eulogised by the King, and showered with laurels by

leading enemies of the workers, for their work in arranging the Dawes Treaty.

The capitalist work of the Labour Party has been admitted by its own members. Mr. E. D. Morel, writing in the "New Leader," says:—

That it should have been possible for the Conservative leaders last week to affirm dogmatically that a Labour Government had re-established the authority of the Versailles Treaty not again to be questioned by any British Government, without such affirmation being queried by so much as a negative interjection, is the kind of thing which is calculated to spread the dry-rot of suspicion and disillusion in our ranks. For everyone is aware that so long as an unamended Versailles Treaty continues to be the public law of Europe, Europe will not know Peace. We have been told so by our leaders for five years, and we knew it without their telling us. Principles proclaimed for years cannot be abandoned in a night by a Party to whom principles are realities.

**The Dawes Plan.**

"The Dawes plan is a plan devoid of sentiment or political or nationalistic feeling; it is a plan which considers simply and solely the best way of getting the greatest amount of money out of Germany."

That is the description of the Scheme by the "Manchester Guardian Weekly" (July 18th).

The process, however, of "getting the money" is to place Germany in the hands of Pierpont Morgan and other bankers who are to have the first call on German assets should there be a default in the interest. The railways of Germany are to be converted into a private company, and a huge joint stock bank set up. The Dawes plan tells the German workers that "wage increases are out of the question," and German capitalists already hint at longer hours and lower wages.

The "brainy" capitalists and their "experts" have evolved a scheme to finance industry in Germany so that out of a larger production goods may be sent to the Allied countries as reparations.

That policy is simply a continuance of the "dumping" process which our masters have been complaining of for the past few years. But the Dawes plan intensifies it by arranging for more goods to be given free to the capitalists of Allied Nations. Not only so, but the speeding up and greater output which will ensue in Germany will intensify the competition in the world's markets. This peace cure of the Labour

Government will not improve the economic situation. The capitalists here who support this reparations swindle will hypocritically tell the workers "You must accept less and work longer owing to German competition and their low standard of living!"

**Its Economic Effects.**

The economic effects of getting the spoils of war has been pointed out by leaders of the Capitalist Parties.

Mr. Asquith said: "The indemnity ships have paralysed our shipping industry, while the German yards are busy."—(Paisley, 2nd June, 1921.)

The financial agents of the Governments, Samuel Montague & Co., declared: "The diversion of German indemnity coal to France has spoiled our market in that country."—(Parliamentary Debates, July 14th, 1924.)

The Conservative Leader, Mr. Baldwin, said, in the House of Commons:

What I want to know is, where are those exports going? The most obvious place for them to go first is into the openest and freest market they can get, that is to say, ours. Unless there happened to follow a period of world expansion such as followed the introduction of Free Trade into this country—an expansion partly due to discovery in industry, and partly due to discoveries of gold—unless you could have some world expansion of that kind, you will have an immense amount of suffering in every industrial country in the world, that receives those exports, but principally in our country. Theoretically, it is perfectly true that over a period of years the position may right itself, but the process of absorption may take many years, and the dislocation that will be caused in the highly-developed industrial communities is a dislocation that will ruin them before the absorption takes place.—(Parliamentary Debates, November 15th, 1923.)

Mr. Hardie, of the Labour Party, replied to a speech thus:

The right hon. gentleman has so little understanding of British industry and British products that he does not realise that we have 1,300 coke ovens standing idle in this country, and that the workers are on the dole. Yet we have a combination of our present Prime Minister and ex-Prime Ministers wanting to bring in coke from Germany, although our coke ovens are shut down and the men are on the dole.—(Parliamentary Debates, July, 14th, 1924.)

The Miners' Federation have also protested about the economic effects of Reparations, but as they belong to the Labour Party they are also responsible for them.

**The Coming War.**

That this Dawes plan contains the seeds



of further war is the claim made by Mr. Morel:

This reparation policy does not make for a peaceful settlement; it makes for dislocation and war. Indeed, my own feeling in this matter is that, if the Dawes Report receives the support, as it does, of a certain number—shall I say a large number?—of financiers, business men and economists, it is because they entertain the view, although, perhaps, it is discreetly hidden, that it will show, after a year or two, that the whole idea of obtaining these vast sums of money from Germany is impracticable in practice, because the Transfer Committee will not be able to transfer to Germany's creditors, either in German currency or in deliveries in kind, the vast sums which are laid down. That hope may mature, but one thing is perfectly clear, and it is the most dangerous aspect of the whole Report, namely, that the whole of this stage-managed Conference, based upon the still continued partial ignorance of the British people of the essence of the reparation policy, and the complete ignorance of the French people of the essence of the reparation policy, is based upon the expectation held out to the British and French peoples that these huge sums of money will, in fact, be obtained. That is the most dangerous thing, because, after those expectations, the reaction of disappointment will come about when it is found that they cannot be realised. That will lead once more to a revival of feeling, and the whole thing will again be thrown into the melting pot.—(*Parliamentary Debates*, July 14th, 1924.)

Mr. P. Snowden represented the British Government at the London Conference, but after the congratulations to the Labour Government was over, he admitted to the *Manchester Guardian* (August 22nd) that the occupation of the Ruhr was illegal, and that "the French industrials have designs upon the economic control of certain German industries which they make no effort to conceal."

#### The Socialist Position.

The general effects of the present Treaty will not be to improve labour's condition anywhere. German capitalists will make sure of their profits, and, with the assistance of the bondholders of allied countries, will squeeze the last ounce of work out of their slaves. The workers in allied countries will find unemployment increase due to payment of reparations in the form of goods. The workers will have to face world wide efforts to make them work harder and, with a large army of unemployed, wages will be cut down further.

There is no escape from the effects of private property in the means of life. The system is based upon trade for profit, and as competition for trade increases, more

scientific methods of production are employed and fewer workers are required to do the work. An ever-increasing part of the wealth goes to the employing class, and thus class distinctions become more glaring. The world's resources, whether in the Ruhr or elsewhere, are eagerly struggled for in the effort to get the world's wealth into fewer hands.

No reparations policy can touch these facts, which are the result of the rule of capital. This intervention of the banking interests into the fight for the spoils of war shows how international that rule of capital is. The Labour Government's unity with Pierpont Morgan & Co. may be explained by the *Daily Herald's* editorial (March 29th, 1924), which said:

The policy of all capitalist countries is, in the last resort, controlled and determined not by the politicians but by the economic and financial powers whose creatures they are.

The Present system is beyond repair. Only a revolution can abolish the "evils" of to-day. Hence our demand is not Reparations, but a Social Revolution!

## POLICY AND TACTICS OF SOCIALISM.

Suggested Lessons for Study Classes in Socialism.

### LESSON No. 2.

#### The Futility of Reform.

#### Social Reform Explained.

14. The basis of the present system is class ownership of the means of producing wealth. The class that rules has always maintained that basis, as no other foundation for their system is possible.

15. Various changes are made, however, in the manner of conducting the system and in the detail conditions under which the people live. These changes do not affect the basis of the system and are therefore called reforms as contrasted with revolutions. The policy of altering the social conditions within a system is called Social Reform. These reforms are mainly carried out by means of legislation.

#### Its Purpose and Results.

16. The growth or evolution of modern industry affects the conditions under which the masses work and live. Our masters

therefore are continually using their political power to "reform" industrial, social and political conditions. They do this to patch up and perpetuate the social system which benefits them, as it is against their interests to allow it to decay.

17. The rapid development of industry makes a complete change of social system more and more possible and necessary. The growing competition for jobs with the increasing uncertainty of a living tends to make the workers oppose the present system. Hence the master class tries to content the workers by promising, and often establishing reforms in the hope that the victims of the system will turn away from revolutionary policies. The purpose of reform is to cover up some of the worst features of the system; to adjust conditions so as to obtain more profits from industry; and to secure and strengthen capitalist domination.

18. The result of reform is a more efficient working of capitalism. The employing class learns by experience what detail changes will benefit them and introduces the reforms upon the plea that they are improving the lot of the worker. The other result of reform follows from this, namely, that they secure the support of the workers and cloud the class issue in their minds. Arthur James Balfour, the Tory prime minister well said: "Social Reform is the antidote to Socialism."

#### Historical Survey of Influence of Reform.

19. The factory system in its early years sank the workers into the most miserable conditions possible. It drove them from their cottage industries amid green fields and fresh air into the insanitary buildings of smoke-poisoned and over-crowded cities. The women and children of both sexes were also recruited for the busy machinery. They worked fourteen and sixteen hours per day and often by night. In factory, shop or mine, they worked under brutal conditions for starvation wages. Individualism was celebrating its victory and the manufacturers accumulated fortunes in a few years. There was no factory legislation restricting the conditions of labour, and attempts to form workmen's combinations resulted in merciless repression.

20. The terrible conditions of life and labour had a disastrous effect on the health of the population and the workers died off rapidly. Some of the far-seeing employers

demand legislation to compel the manufacturers to improve the state of their victims. Workers in their misery destroyed machinery, but it was mainly due to the antagonism between landowners and manufacturers that factory legislation came to be passed.

21. These factory reforms undoubtedly improved conditions for a time. It was because the workers had sunk to such utter degradation and inefficiency that the masters eventually enacted laws to prevent the workers from being killed off. The reforms were necessary to the preservation of the system and only improved the workers' conditions compared with the depths to which they had previously sunk.

22. Since that time nearly all reforms have left the condition of the workers untouched, except where they made them worse. Political reforms, factory laws, pensions for the aged and allowances to the unemployed and sick; such legislation has been enacted in most capitalist countries without making any permanent improvement in working-class conditions. Bismarck, in Germany, heaped up reforms to win the workers away from Socialism and make them good fighting material, but the general condition of the workers remained the same. British capitalists have been ingenious in their reform policy, for it has built up the strength of the masters and kept the workers interested in their masters' affairs to the exclusion of the working-class issues.

In spite of a century of reform Lloyd George admitted in 1911 that there was greater slavery, more poverty and deeper hardship amongst the workers than ever before. In the United States, technical education and other reforms have been instituted to better compete with Germany and other countries, but the early exhaustion, insecurity, lack of property, and poverty of the workers has been testified to by the report of the Committee on Industrial Relations of the U.S.A. Senate.

#### The Economic Barrier to Beneficial Legislation.

23. The operation of reform legislation brings in its train counter effects due to the economic laws of capitalism. A shorter working day is a desirable thing, but anything which makes labour power more expensive drives the employers to adopt some method to cheapen the cost of production.



The hours are made less, but the energy and output remain the same as during the longer working day. Greater division of labour, more efficient superintendence, the elimination of the unfit, more scientific methods, better machinery and the introduction of women into the factory are some of the after-effects inevitably resulting from an increase in the price of labour power. The unemployment and insecurity of the worker are thereby continued and grow with the economic development.

24. Henry Ford testified that the output was greater in eight hours than during ten hours, and profits increased enormously. The evidence of Lord Leverhulme, the advocate of a six-hour day, is, that in his great soap factory profits multiplied with the reduction of hours.

#### So-Called Revolutionary Reforms.

25. Many well-known reformers call themselves Socialists of the revisionist school. They claim to have revised the teachings of Marx and Engels and made the theory up-to-date. They say we must go a step at a time. They argue that their reforms are revolutionary.

These men simply act as agents of capitalism in teaching the workers to fight for reforms. The time thus spent is lost to the teaching of socialism. The difficult details of the million and one reforms would take as much time for the average worker to understand as the real teachings of socialism. If the reforms advocated were likely to aid the workers in their struggle, the capitalists in control would not yield them, and to go before the workers with a reform programme is therefore a fraud, for it can only be carried into legislation with the consent of the employing class in power. The reforms advocated by Kautsky in The Erfurter Programme would not improve the workers' conditions, and even to get them we would have to engage in the anti-socialist tactics of the German party.

#### Arguments of Reformers.

26. All the leading capitalist reformers, from Lloyd George to the leaders of the Labour Party, argue that if the workers will give them the power they will help the workers. The whole history of capitalist legislation is against them. The reform policy of capitalism is carried out to deceive the workers, to make them more efficient

wage-slaves and to bind the workers more securely to allegiance to capitalism.

27. We see how bitterly the employers fight the workers' demands for higher wages and how brutally they subdue them. Can we expect these same employers to pass beneficial legislation? Their claim to have improved our conditions by reforms is flatly contradicted by every inquiry into industrial conditions. The unceasing unrest and strike fever in the ranks of labour show that all the reforms have failed to stop the decline in labour's conditions. All the arguments of reformers fail to show how it is possible to reduce the economic insecurity of the workers or to strengthen the producers' position against the employer by reforms.

#### Waste of Effort in Fighting for Reforms.

28. The time spent on preaching reforms is wasted because it does not enlighten the worker on the causes of his conditions and the remedy. It simply leads him to expect benefits from the ruling class and the present system. All the reform campaigns of the past have resulted in some kind of legislation which eventually worked out to our disadvantage. Reformers forget that the very growth and evolution of the industrial system is quicker than the passing of legislation, and the actual development of the system causes more evils than are temporarily reformed. As soon as one evil is reformed twenty more arise. If the workers devoted one tenth of the attention and energy to Socialism that they give to reform advocacy—Socialism would be here.

#### Confusion of Issue in Worker's Mind.

29. The advocate of Socialism finds his work hampered at every step by the confusion created in the worker's mind by reformists. The workers are taught to believe that they have a common cause with non-socialists in fighting for amelioration. Instead of explaining to the workers the class character of modern society with the resulting enslavement and poverty that will always be the workers' portion, the reformers create false hopes in the worker's mind. The great majority therefore follow the policy of exhausting every possible error before coming to the right conclusion. They usually grow apathetic and sickened of politics altogether before the right stage is

reached. Socialist activity by the workers requires a clear recognition of the class conflict, and as the belief in reforms obscures this, reform advocacy is injurious to the workers' interests.

#### Some Reform Organisations of To-day.

30. The societies advocating reforms are countless. They range from nationalisation Societies to Currency Reform Leagues. Shopkeepers, professional men, manufacturers, bankers and brewers, all vie with each other in seeking some reform to benefit their particular interests. Business men wanting more credit advocate currency reforms, but they fail to show how any alteration of banking laws will alter the relative positions of employer and employees. Labour Parties and Communist bodies have reform programmes and enlist their membership by this means. Their reforms, however, are either of the same variety as we have had for decades from Liberal and Tory or they are reforms which are impossible under capitalism, such as the demand to "absorb the unemployed." Capitalism needs an unemployed army to keep down wages, and this industrial reserve is continually reinforced by those thrown out of work by machinery and speeding-up methods.

The Anti-Sweating League has been loud in its demands for Trade Boards to be established in "sweated trades." They rejoiced when the Trade Boards Act was passed, and reformers are busy demanding its application to more trades. The fraud of reform is clearly shown by the admissions of labour leaders concerning these Trade Boards. Mr. J. Beard, President of the Workers' Union, says (*Daily Herald*, Aug. 19): "Trade Boards stabilised low wages and servile conditions and weakened trade unionism."

#### Social Reform Leaves Causes Untouched.

31. An examination of modern society shows that the poverty and degradation of the workers is due to the capitalist system itself. The only remedy, therefore, is to remove the cause of the social condition—to abolish the present system and replace it by a social system in which the means of production are owned in common, and in which exploitation will not exist.

32. Socialists are scientific and therefore seek to remove the causes instead of tinkering

ing with effects. Social reform is like charity—it perpetuates the misery and does not prevent its continual reappearance. The reformer fights tuberculosis, whilst the workers' conditions cause the disease to flourish. "Criminals" are hounded while poverty and unemployment drive men and women to recruit the army of "criminals."

#### Evolution and Revolution.

33. Reformers claim that they believe in evolution as opposed to revolution. They preach "going gradually," or "a step at a time," and they attempt to justify their ideas on scientific grounds. Revolution, however, is a fact common to natural and human history alike. Revolution is the more or less rapid change made necessary by the previous evolution of the organism. Each system of society evolves up to the point where a complete change is required, and that complete change is a Revolution. The present system evolves, but no amount of evolution of private property produces common ownership. The common ownership for which Socialists strive can only be established by the rise of the working class to political power and the use of that power to transform the economic basis of society. That is a social revolution. No accumulation of reforms or steps can alter the economic foundations of capitalism.

Evolution and Revolution are not opposed to each other. The evolution of capitalism with all its reforms produces those conditions making a revolution inevitable if society is to progress. Socialists hold that conditions are ripe for revolution. Conditions are beyond reform.

#### Nationalisation and Municipalisation.

34. Government ownership is not Socialism. The transfer of industries from private firms to State ownership is simply a policy dictated by capitalist needs and for capitalist advantage. The most open enemies of Socialism have nationalised railways and other businesses in various countries without in any way benefiting the working class. Under Government ownership "sweating" is quite common, as can be seen from complaints about conditions in the Post Office, Mint, etc. In France and Canada, strikes on the nationalised railways have been frequent and ruthlessly suppressed, and active workers victimised.

The saving of waste resulting from



abolishing competition means a reduction in the number of workers needed. That is the effect of Government ownership. The control of an industry by one employer—the Capitalist State—means a stronger force against the workers if they strike against their conditions, and the victimised workers have no other employer in the industry to employ them when they are dismissed. It is like a Trust.

The profits made in Government services are used to benefit the property owners—the taxpayers.

All these arguments apply against municipal ownership.

A. KOHN.

## A LOOK ROUND.

### WHO ARE THE LOAFERS.

Deducting loafers and criminals one person in three was in a state of perpetual poverty. The merely idle should be taught with the lash if need be, the dignity of work.—(Rev. Basil Bourchier, St. Jude's, Hampstead, *Morning Post*, August 11th, 1924.)

Without doubt the bogey men of Capitalism fear the danger of being left behind with their out-of-date contributions toward stifling working-class discontent. Statements upon social evils become increasingly common; but a tirade against poverty does not imply the knowledge or desire to remove the cause. Witness Lloyd George, who, with his fulsome pretence of sympathy for the workers' suffering, still makes every effort to win their support for the system that makes that suffering inevitable. Our cleric is another, but lacking the experience of the astute politician, he lets pussy out of the bag easily. He said:

"Poverty was dangerous, it created the revolutionary temper, and was a menace to the very existence of society."—(Ibid.)

The Socialist knows, of course, that poverty alone does not make the revolutionary. It is the knowledge of their class position and knowledge of their potential strength as a united body that makes revolutionaries among the ranks of the working class. But when we read the suggestion of flogging loafers, well! we fear there is a grave mistake somewhere. A real Lady, writing in the *Express*, August 11, 1924, says:—

The London season that has just closed has been the most brilliant and noteworthy in my memory. . . . Three months of perpetual

amusement take their toll of everyone, and society is obliged to retire to the sea and the moors, or to seek the peace and tranquillity of the countryside in order to recuperate. . . . I am inclined to think it would be better to reserve some charitable functions for the winter months, when there is little to do and time hangs heavily on our hands. (Lady Alexander.)

\* \* \*

### A MESSAGE FROM MARS.

Attempts are to be made during the coming days by several scientists to communicate with the Planet Mars, which will be in closer proximity to the earth than it has been for years. Life of a very high order it is suggested lives upon the Planet.

Man of Mars: Say! you must be pretty comfortable over yonder with your science, machinery, fertile soil, etc.

Earthly Socialist: Well, not exactly, there is plenty of everything for all, but the producers haven't got it.

M. of M.: Here, no leg-pulling! Who the stars has got it if the producers have not?

E.S.: Truth to tell, the non-producers, our masters who we do the job for.

M. of M.: Good heavens! Are you all mad?

E.S.: No, not exactly; we, the workers, keep the show going, but our masters keep us mighty poor. You see, they have pinched this old earth and everything on it. We're trying to get our mates to see through the game. Better news next time.

\* \* \*

### THE REWARD OF ABILITY.

It is not in the least surprising to the Socialist that in the rotten system of to-day those with any outstanding ability, unless possessed of cunning and business acumen, lay up little for moth and rust to corrupt. Just as the labours of the inventors have mainly benefited those who could financially exploit their ideas, leaving them mostly in the direst poverty, so we find the story retold in every walk of life. For over 30 years the late T. E. Dunville, the music-hall comedian, continued to provoke laughter, holding his own, until quite recent time, with every popular star of his day. But fear of a declining popularity and a much reduced salary brought him to a watery grave in despair. (*Daily Chronicle*, March 24, 24.) As a laughter maker he must have

brought fortunes to the music-hall magnates, yet he left behind the paltry sum of £236. (*Daily Chronicle*, August 11, 1924). How much of the great wealth of the few is coined in the tears and agony of men, women and children of the working class?

\* \* \*

### THE ARTFUL DODGERS.

Ask the average worker, Do the capitalists as a class work? and he will probably answer: "Well, with their brain." Karl Marx, in his work, *Capital*, showed how the reaching of a certain stage of capitalist development relieves the capitalist of his one-time function of directing industry, bringing forward at the same time a special kind of wage labourer whose exclusive function now becomes the work of supervision, management, etc. Capitalists still endeavour to convince the workers that they are indispensable in order to justify their now entirely parasitic part in society. The enormous wealth extorted from the working class demands no service or ability from its receivers; they may be financially interested in dozens of concerns without any personal contact:

Colonel Arthur Barhum is director of 62 concerns, Mr. Seymour Berry, J.P., appears as director of 71, while five of the Cory family, partners in Orders & Hansfords, are directors of 136 different companies. (*Directory of Directors*.)

Let our so-called business men speak and show how they buy the brains they require like they do raw material.

Mr. Eric Gamage, Director and General Manager of A. & W. Gamage, Ltd., says: "I never waste time in doing work other people can do for me equally well." Sir Ernest Benn is Managing Director, Benn Brothers, Ltd. "These," he says, "are my rules. I never do a piece of work that can be avoided; I never do anything until I am perfectly sure that no one else is capable of doing it. It is the greatest folly to hug work." Sir Charles Wakefield, Director, C. C. Wakefield and Co., Ltd., "is emphatic upon the importance of the delegation of duties which it is not necessary he himself should perform. 'I must not be interpreted wrongly when I say that I have found the golden rule to be 'Do no work that you can put on other shoulders'.'"—Quoted from "How we get more into the business day," *System*, July.)

\* \* \*

### CATCHING THEM YOUNG.

Outlining the objects of the Boy Scout movement at St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, Gen. Baden Powell said (*Observer*, June 22,

1924) what was at the root of our troubles to-day was:—

Selfishness of class against class, party against party, between employer and employed, and between the rich and the poor; there was continual fighting for self interest, and that was what they were out to combat.

Which we call, without sentiment, the class struggle. That the object of the Scout movement should be to combat self-interest we never doubted—but in whom? Do the capitalists, who enjoy all the advantages arising from the workers' efforts, require instruction as to which is the most desirable life, theirs or the workers'? Or will they rather use every effort to subdue self-interest in our class, upon whose docility and submission their privileges are based? The Chief Scout tells us other objects are the stimulation of character, handicraft, and physical health.

All three went together, and the fourth was to harness those three points of efficiency to the service of others of the community.

There you have it. Our masters require patriotic, industrious, and healthy boys, so that when the time arrives they may be efficient in the SERVICE OF OTHERS—in war and peace. Fellow workers, to-day you are notoriously unselfish. When, like your masters, you fight for self-interest through understanding your class position there can only be victory for you and the establishment of Socialism.

MAC.

### NOW ON SALE.

## MANIFESTO

OF

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OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE GREAT WAR AND THE GREATER WARS THAT ARE COMING

Since the world turned wearily from the battlefield there has been a gradual slump in the literature of war, and the tide has set towards the "Problems of the Peace." All who could wield a facile pen have rushed to their ink-pots and boldly covered reams of white paper with explanations of why the New World that was expected to follow the war looks so dreadfully like the old one. Most people can see that the rich are still with us, and apparently richer than ever. None will deny that the poor are still here, and relatively if not absolutely, poorer than ever. What has happened? Fortunately the scribes will tell us this also. Unhappily, they have so many explanations of the same phenomena that a process of cancelling out takes place, and the only voice that emerges is that of the one who tells us to get ready for another war. Certainly the facts seem to support that view. There are more bayonets and more armed preparations in Europe to-day than ever before. Recourse to the League of Nations has simply added to them. Every barracks is full of soldiers, drilling and training for the next great struggle. Fleets are being overhauled and provided with deadlier guns than ever. Every week we are informed of a new development in aerial terror, whilst placid bands of assiduous chemists have added seventy new poisonous gases to the weapons of the next war. The joke about the "War to End War" has become too hackneyed for repetition, but few seem to have learned the lesson.

The latest addition to the literature of the Peace is a two volume, 1,400 page work,

entitled "These Eventful Years: The Twentieth Century in the Making, as Told by Many of its Makers." Rather a mouthful, isn't it? Such an expressive title! obviously chosen for its slight poetic flavour. These Eventful Years! One can almost hear it being mournfully intoned to the evening congregation. And thus it is called a Pischah book. This is possibly more apposite than the originators thought. They have intended, doubtless, to convey that they were surveying the world and its affairs from a sublime height. Why Pischah, and not the Matterhorn or Everest should have been chosen is not clear. We can only assume their choice was influenced by the knowledge that Pischah stands near the head of the Dead Sea.

It remains but to add that the price of the work being only a paltry fifty shillings, there can be little excuse for non-possession. Think of the contributors, too! Von Tirpitz and H. G. Wells, Sir Oliver Lodge and Phillip Snowden, Lady Rhondda and Wellington Koo, Admiral von Scheer and Admiral Jellicoe, Ludendorff and Bertrand Russell; and seventy others including J. L. Garvin. We do not intend to review this stupendous work, owing to our having been unfortunately overlooked on the free list. J. L. Garvin, with that native modesty that so well becomes him, has partially remedied this by using up three columns of his "Observer" (August 24th) in boosting his own contribution to the book.

He explains that he was asked to contribute the first four chapters entitled an "Introduction to the History of Our Own



Times," and they trace the steady approach of the war through the preceding twenty-five years. Their measure may be taken when one notes that the fall of Bismarck is taken as the catastrophic starting-point, and that the interval is filled up with proper names. The Kaiser and the Tsar, variously referred to as William II and Nicholas II, or the German Emperor and the last of the Tsars, are the villains of the piece. What those two men have to answer for! Curiously enough, the name George the Fifth nowhere appears. This seems to be a grave omission. Surely if our late redoubtable antagonist and our former ally were epitomised or symbolically expressed in the occupant of the throne, a like service should be performed for our own monarch. And we all know what he did in the Great War. It the Kaiser lost his war, obviously George the Fifth won it. Let justice be done.

But to resume. The story of the war itself occupies 50 pages. He suggests the temper of that account by a brief extract describing the turning point of the conflict, July 18th, 1918. It is a forceful piece of writing, quite in the vein of the militant arm-chair strategist. "Machine guns flashed over the standing corn"; troops "gathered under those far-ranging tree-tops"; the French force "thrust like a sword into the flank of the exposed German salient"; the enemy "lost 15,000 prisoners, 300 guns and broad positions that were vital," etc., etc. But not a word of a dead man. The monarchs previously so much in the limelight also appear to have been elsewhere.

And then we get to the Peace. It is recognised and admitted that the Peace is a frost.

"What the Germans forgot in 1871, the Allies did not remember at the end of June, 1919." Yes, the Peace is a frost. And what will happen when the thaw sets in?

"Europe is slowly drifting towards another catastrophe." The map of Europe as re-drawn under the Peace Treaties cannot endure. The existing League of Nations is described as utterly inadequate. The exclusion of Germany is described as "one of the most fantastic travesties of human purpose"; the banning of Russia as timid and parochial.

And what is the lesson mankind is to learn from all this? What practical steps are formulated that we may avoid another

Armageddon? What must we do to be saved?

Mr. Garvin's own summary may do him less than justice, but apparently there are but two things to be done to avert the threatened holocaust. First revise the Peace Treaties by peaceful means, and next enlarge the League of Nations by the inclusion of Germany and Russia, followed later by America.

Is it possible that a man of education and some width of outlook can fob his readers off with that stuff? Does he really believe it himself? Unfortunately there is no reason for doubting it. Mr. Garvin and those of his school look upon the present system of society as final, and for all useful purposes, eternal. Modification there may be, but fundamental change—no. Just as slavery was justified and defended in former times, even by men of culture and feeling, so wage-slavery under capitalism is justified and apologised for by those who profit by it. This attitude may result from a lack of imagination, but more probably from a comfortable feeling that the working class is a special dispensation of Providence, designed to do the necessary work of the world, in order that a smaller aristocratic class may cultivate the finer side of life.

With this view of human society it is not to be wondered at that the re-drawing of frontiers appears to them as epochal; that the stage-play of international leagues assumes a solemn profundity. When the working class realises its true position, it will view an arbitrary line drawn across a country as of equal validity with a chalk mark across the Atlantic. If Alsace were restored to Germany to-morrow, the Alsatian would still remain a peasant or a worker. If the Germans, Austrians, Poles, Rumanians, Czechs, Tyrolese, etc., were all re-shuffled to-morrow, the workers of those areas would still remain workers. Differences of comfort or amenity, custom and language there might be, but working men would remain working men, and that is the essence of the matter. The Irish workers are finding out that a difference in political bosses is not such a vital matter as they once thought. Where capitalism is, there is wage-slavery, and the colour of the flag that floats over the factory makes no real difference to the worker. The great nations of the world are capitalist nations. The League of Nations can be nought else but

a league of capitalists. Capitalists live solely and entirely upon the robbery of the working class. How then can we get enthusiastic over a league of our exploiters?

The working class will organise itself to expropriate those who live parasitically upon it. It will link itself with the workers of every country, to achieve this internationally, when the workers understand their class-interests.

W. T. H.

### A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

Before proceeding to touch upon the question of class struggles as a feature of historical development, we must point out to new students of our theory of history the necessity of them holding in mind a few important points hitherto not mentioned in this sketch. It is the nature of the Socialist philosophy, based upon the firm ground of positive science, to be thoroughly comprehensive. Hence the historical aspect of that philosophy, which we are here considering, embraces the findings of science as generally applied to man. Thus all ideas concerning the duration of man's existence upon the earth which are derived from Biblical teachings, must be put on one side as being contrary to facts.

Generally speaking, until the early part of the 19th century the idea that man was created some 6,000 years ago by a supernatural power held undisputed sway over the minds of the great bulk of the people. So certain was the idea of creation held to be true that one eminent divine, Dr. Lightfoot, at one time Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, went so far as to fix the "precise date" of man's creation. According to him man was created on the 23rd of October, 4004 B.C. at 9 o'clock in the morning. A similar utterance nowadays might impel rude people to call him Dr. Lighthouse. As the historian, Buckle, satirically remarked when another eminent divine fixed the "date" of Noah's entry into the Ark, "theologians have always been remarkable for the exactness of their knowledge on subjects respecting which nothing is known." Nowadays, of course, these ideas are no longer considered as serious contributions to the study of man and his

history. The principle of evolution has largely superseded the dogmas of theology, and it is more and more becoming acknowledged, even by theologians themselves, that man is a product of a process of evolution from lower forms of life—"a process of evolution going on through millions of years." Hence the life history of the human race cannot be confined within the narrow limits of the more or less orthodox historians, who would lead us to believe that the history of Britain began with the invasion of the Romans, or that the history of America began with the arrival of the Puritan fathers from England.

The same method of enquiry which is employed in natural history, as far as origins are concerned, must be employed in human history, as it has been during the last hundred years with great success. The labours of many investigators into human origins have brought to light a mass of evidence showing that, not for 6,000 years, but for more than 100,000 years have human beings inhabited the earth. The view expressed by Lewis Henry Morgan that the existence of mankind extends backwards immeasurably and loses itself in a vast and profound antiquity, is shared by practically all the scientists who have investigated the history of mankind. Though opinions vary among geologists, those who study the general structure of the earth, and among anthropologists, those who study the physical and certain aspects of the social history of man, concerning the extent of human existence, it is generally agreed that any estimate which falls short of 100,000 years may be ignored.

History as commonly understood merely refers to the period of human existence during which we have written records of human activities, but the term "pre-historic" has now become quite common, and is generally applied to that vast period of man's existence about which the ordinary written records tell us nothing.

The evidence of man's antiquity is not merely confined to the discoveries of human skulls, but is also to be gathered from the relics and tools unearthed from ancient river-beds, limestone caverns, lake bottoms, rude sepulchres and stone structures in many parts of the world.

As Paul Lafarque points out in his "Evolution of Property" the fact of man being a tool-making animal, "the discovery of a



stone implement in a cavern or geological stratum is proof as positive of the presence of a human being as the human skeleton itself."

Throughout the immense period of time that men have roamed "our planet," they have pushed forward in their conquest of the forces of nature unaided by any power other than that of their own mental and physical abilities. No supernatural power has guided the footsteps of mankind in their long and painful journey from savagery to civilisation. Thus must working-class students look to the doings and surroundings of man alone in order to understand the movements of history.

And now about the struggle of classes. The Socialist is often reproached for declaring the existence of the class struggle as though he created the struggle. As well might our opponents reproach Copernicus for the earth's motion round the sun, or Sir Isaac Newton for the law of gravitation. The Socialist does not create the struggle, he but points to its existence and to the lessons to be learned therefrom. The class struggle arises from the private or class-ownership of the means of living, the land and the other resources of wealth production and distribution. Private property in the means of life necessarily implies a social system composed of masters and slaves, the former living on the proceeds of the exploitation of the latter.

Now how did these different social classes come into existence? It was an idea of some of the 18th-century philosophers that human society was held together by some sort of contract which was originally entered into between those who governed and those who were governed, but this idea is not a correct one, as the existence of an armed force in all class societies throughout history bears ample testimony.

Nor does the so-called "physiological differences," as suggested by certain biologists, account for class distinctions. Class distinctions between men are to be found, not by making physiological comparisons between human beings, but in the way in which they get their living. "A beggar," says Unterman, "has the same physiological organisation as a king." Class differences are not biological, they are fundamentally economic in character. If natural differences accounted for class distinctions, class societies would meet us in every phase

of human history, and such is not the case.

Morgan points out that, assuming 100,000 years to be the extent of man's existence upon the earth, something like 95 thousand years of this period must have been spent by mankind under savagery and barbarism. Now since classes did not arise until the higher stage of barbarism, it will be gathered that classless society existed for by far the greater portion of the period of human existence. As Marx observes on the questions of classes in modern society:

One thing, however, is clear, nature does not produce on the one side owners of money or commodities, and on the other men possessing nothing but their own labour-power. This relation has no natural basis, neither is its social basis one that is common to all historical periods. It is clearly the result of a past historical development, the product of many economical revolutions, of the extinction of a whole series of older forms of social production.—(Capital, pp. 147-148.)

Now the use of private property in the means of life did not take place as a result of a process of reasoning on the part of human beings, that is to say, men did not debate the question as to whether they would establish the institution of private property. In fact, much historical evidence exists to show that strenuous efforts were made by early man to prevent the break up of their communal institutions. Private property worked its way into the conditions of human existence by way of necessity, and had to be adopted by mankind as a means of their social advancement. The rise of classes, with their conflicting interests and struggles, is to be traced to the economic development we have mentioned, namely, the development of the tools of wealth production, aided by certain discoveries.

Whilst the productive powers of primitive society yielded no more wealth than was required for mere existence, all members of that society who were able would be compelled to devote the whole of their time in producing the wherewithal to live. "No idlers can be maintained at the cost of society." But when the productive powers of society increased to the extent that a surplus above that which is necessary for maintenance is produced, a change in social relations is made possible. The path is opened for the formation of distinct social classes. We cannot here enter into the question of the many conditions contributing to the rise of class society, as our main theme concerns the main factor of historical

development. Only a few historical examples can be given by way of showing the truth of our theory of history, and in giving these examples it must be understood that they are taken from the Eastern part of the world, called the Old World, where, with certain natural advantages, the course of economic development first facilitated the rise of private property. The domestication of animals, unquestionably one of the great discoveries of the world, appears to have been one of the main contributions to the growth of private property in the means of life.

As the number of domesticated animals grew the more did it become necessary to find grounds for them to graze upon. Consequently, from taming and rearing animals, men were sooner or later compelled to turn their attention to agricultural pursuits, and to give up their habits of roaming from place to place and settle down to a more or less fixed habitation. Further, the division of labour in tribal society, hitherto confined to the sexes, the men engaged in war, hunting, fishing and the production of the raw materials for these occupations, whilst the women were in charge of the household, and cooked, sewed and weaved, was now extended to men themselves. Different professions or trades arose within the tribal organisation, and consequent upon the increase of wealth production which followed, the more did wealth fall into the possession of certain families within the tribe, which in turn created the desire for more wealth. But this could only be obtained by the employment of more labour power, and to get this was not possible within the tribe itself. The equality which prevailed under the conditions of life of tribal communism did not allow of men being pressed into the service of others. The required labour power had to be introduced from outside the tribal organisation. The solution to the problem of finding this labour power was found in war. It must be noted that tribal man did not extend the same feeling of comradeship to the members of other tribes as he did to those of his own tribe. For other tribes were regarded as enemies, and theoretically as well as practically every tribe was at war with other tribes, as in our own times people of other nations are regarded with suspicion, as though they are destined to endanger our existence.

Hitherto wars had been carried on between neighbouring tribes largely on account of the scarcity of food. In fact, so precarious were the conditions of human existence that cannibalism was often resorted to as a means of averting starvation.

A tribe which possessed a good hunting territory was at all times subject to attack from those tribes in a less fortunate position. But the all-round progress made in cattle raising and agriculture, which was later facilitated by the production of iron, altered all this. Wars between tribes were now undertaken with other objects in view. The captured enemies, instead of being killed and eaten as formerly, were now pressed into the service of their conquerors by being set to work in the interests of the latter; in other words, they were enslaved. Says Engels in his work, "The Origin of the Family":—

Under the given historical conditions, the first great division of social labour, by increasing the productivity of labour, adding to the wealth, and enlarging the field of productivity, necessarily carried slavery in its wake. Out of the first great division of social labour arose the first great division of society into two classes: masters and servants, exploiters and exploited.

From this time onwards down to the present day the evolution of society has produced different ruling and subject classes, slavery, though different in degree from that of earlier times, still exists as a feature of human society. For, slavery it must be understood, does not merely mean an intensified form of work, which is the popular notion, slavery is political and economic subjection—political in the sense that an armed force exists to conserve the monopoly of the wealth produced by and stolen from the slave class, and economic in that the slave class is divorced from the means of life. The question of whether the work of the slaves is laborious or otherwise is irrelevant to the real meaning of slavery. As common experience shows, the vast resources of wealth production in modern society are privately owned, the owners of these taking no part in wealth production, yet enjoying the wealth produced by those who have to seek their permission in order to live, which is the very essence of slavery.

However, what is important for the working-class student of history to note is that, class society with its consequent enslavement of the wealth producers is the result of econo-



mic development, and further that it was when first established, a step forward in the advancement of human society.

"We must not forget," says Engels, in his work, "Anti Dühring," that our entire economic, political and intellectual development has its foundations in a state of society in which slavery was regarded universally as necessary. In this sense we may say that without the ancient slavery there would have been no modern Socialism."

What is also of importance is that the use of force was required to establish class society, as the use of force has been necessary to its existence ever since. "Force," says Marx, "is the midwife of the old society pregnant with the new."

R. REYNOLDS.

(To be continued).

## SOCIALISM AND THE MENTAL REVOLUTION.

The human mind, like all things organic and otherwise, undergoes a process of change due to the continual change in its environment, that is to say, in the conditions determining its development. This simple fact is continually ignored by the opponents of Socialist education of all shades of thought, from the crusted Tory to the impatient Communist, who believes in "revolution" by means of an "intelligent minority."

If we glance over human history we discover that the growth of knowledge and mental activity has been by no means uniform or smoothly regular. There have been long periods in which certain ideas, expressing themselves in various social customs and institutions, have reigned supreme only to be swept aside in a comparatively short space of time by ideas, customs and institutions of an opposite character. As instances, we may cite the downfall of paganism and the triumph of Christianity within the Roman Empire, which marked the passing of the ancient patriarchal order of society and the rise of feudalism; likewise the break-up of Catholicism before the onslaught of Protestant and Rationalist criticism which coincided with the decay of feudalism, the seizure of estates of the Church, and the development of modern capitalist society.

Up till the last century the human mind was wrapped in the swaddling clothes of

religion; therefore changes in the general mental outlook of mankind have appeared to be simply religious changes. As above indicated, however, these changes have been closely connected with social and political revolutions and the various factions in the religious world are found on examination to be practically identical with certain organised class interests. These interests have fought their battles with a ferocity which is by no means attributable simply to fanaticism on speculative or ethical questions. Conflicting "faiths" have merely sanctified in the eyes of their respective holders the greed which has been the real basis of their hostility.

In other words, the various classes which have in succession arisen and dominated society, while in a very large measure conscious of their material interests, have not understood the forces whose development has provided them with their position and the opportunity of satisfying their ambitions. Before these forces could be understood in a scientific manner they had first to develop to maturity. They had to shake off the fetters of "individualism" and become social in character.

This event commenced a century and a half ago and is known as the industrial revolution. The death of handicraft and the birth of machine industry set free productive powers latent in society which revealed for the first time the existence of economic law. Various thinkers from the ancients downwards had speculated and arrived at half truths concerning the material basis of society; but to make a science of economics, and therefore of history, the economic forces themselves had to seize upon society, as it were, and beat their own lessons into the heads of men. "Control us or perish!" is the insistent demand these forces make to-day; but to control requires understanding. Hence the attempt to control the economic resources of society is identified with the shedding of all superstition concerning the nature of these resources.

Rebellious classes in the past attributed their success to the favour of gods or the superiority of their moral codes; but the revolutionary section of the subject class of to-day, the wage-slave class, has no use for religion or ethics. Science, organised knowledge, is its only weapon, its only

means of self-fortification in the struggle for emancipation. "Study and learn!" is therefore the keynote of Socialist propaganda.

"Ha!" says our opponent, "but the masses will never study, they will never learn!" and he points to the well-known lethargy which sometimes appears to be the principal mental characteristic of the modern slave. He seizes upon a half-truth and makes of it a lie!

In spite of all the apathy and apparent indifference the masses slowly, but none the less surely, are studying and learning. Indeed it would be nothing less than a miracle if they were not. Face to face with an environment which is changing more rapidly than at any previous period in history, each succeeding generation of workers sheds something of the superstition of its forbears. One by one the links in the mental chains are snapping and the workers' minds strain towards the light.

Those who assert that the workers will never learn attempt to make the workers' minds an exception to the general law of adaptation so apparent everywhere in the universe. They postulate a supernatural density on the part of the slave and treat his ignorance as though it was a basic cause instead of an effect of his poverty. When one considers the exhausting and brutalising nature of the toil exacted from the modern slave the wonder, if any must be, that there is any mental energy with which to think at all.

In addition to this physical factor there is the deliberately reactionary "education" with which the workers are crammed during childhood and the similar influence of the daily press. Yet in spite of every such effort on the part of the ruling class to preserve their mental grip upon their slaves, what do we find?

The Churches have long ago confessed their inability to hold their own against popular indifference and the effects of increasing technical knowledge. The numbers of the workers who willingly absorb the dope of religion steadily declines.

In the realm of politics we find a similar process of disintegration on the part of accepted beliefs and institutions. While the Socialist does not share the illusions current concerning the rise of the Labour Party, this much at least is evident, viz., that the parties openly standing for the

existing social order are rapidly losing their grip of the workers' minds. Social changes are desired, although their necessary character is far from being correctly understood. Thus in both fields of traditional thought and popular activity, i.e., religion and politics, we find a growing scepticism concerning things as they are.

The industrial upheaval has resulted in a growth of positive knowledge difficult to estimate to its full extent, because of the inherent tendency of mental forms to survive for some considerable time the steady change in their inner content. The process can perhaps best be described as one of undermining. On the surface the present structure appears as it was, but the forces beneath are none the less preparing its collapse.

It is the function of the Socialist Party to organise the workers as rapidly as the change in their environment compels them to recognise the social character of the process of production, and consequently the necessity of its being controlled in the interests of society at large if exploitation and poverty for the workers are to be abolished.

E. B.

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## RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

- Singing Jailbirds*.—A Drama by Upton Sinclair, 25 cents. Pasadena, California.
- Anglo-Russian Treaties*.—W. P. Coates, 6d. Anglo-Russian Parl. Com., 3, Adam Street, W.C.
- Socialism and Savolea*.—By Ernest Trueman, 3d. The Economics Club, 5, Commercial Road, Lerwick.
- Family Limitation*.—Margaret Sanger, 6d. Rose Witcop, 17, Richmond Gardens, W.12.
- The Re-making of Russia*.—Kurt Wiedenfeld, 3/6. Labour Publishing Co., London.



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OCT.,



1924

**THE DECAY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.**

After a meteoric career lasting no more than 3 or 4 years the Communist Party in this country finds itself trying with ever less success to stem the tide of members drifting away to the Labour Party or into apathy. In spite of the blundering ineptitude of its leaders in a sphere which they thought peculiarly their own—the sphere of stunts and political intrigue—they had at first a small measure of success. That they were able to achieve this was due partly to the money received by them from Moscow and thrown away in advocating futile insurrectionary policies which were always promptly disavowed whenever the authorities threatened suppression, but chiefly due to the chaos of trade and production after the 'world war, and the consequent weakened hold on the workers' minds of pre-war political ideas and allegiances. But even in ground apparently so fertile the fruit of their labours was ridiculously small in comparison to the cost in money and energy.

Although they began with a flourish and reported frequent huge accessions of new members, they have in fact failed to grow and even to hold their initial position. Their total present membership is less than the 5,000 who were alleged to have joined them from the I.L.P. in 1922. Weaker

numerically, they are weaker too in the respect they can demand from the class-conscious worker. From vigorous if somewhat hysterical hostility towards the Labour Party, they turned in 1921 to the United Front policy. They then claimed that support of anti-working-class candidates was not incompatible with the continuation of communist propaganda and the denunciation of the very men they were asking the workers to vote into power. Incredible as it may seem, it required considerable experience to convince them that the communist rank and file would always in this dilemma be compelled to suppress their own views in order not to offend the Labour Party's capitalist sympathisers. While the job seekers and the light-minded intellectual riff-raff which had been drawn in by the cash and glitter of the Communist movement saw in the new policy only the promise of elevation to the House of Commons. The boasted thousands of "communist" votes given to communist Labour candidates showed, not the strength but the weakness of the Communist Party; the dependence of a so-called independent organisation on Labour votes and the Labour Party machine. So soon as they found this out the careerists and the "intellectuals" began to desert the sinking ship, following, of course, the ancient custom of their kind of giving every excuse but the true one. Meynell, Malone, Windsor and later, Walton Newbold, Ellen Wilkinson and Philips Price are some of those who have left because of the call of ambition, the passing of the excitement of the earlier months, or simply because they had learned through experience that the fundamental ideas on which Communist Policy had been built were partly false and wholly inapplicable except in the peculiar conditions which gave them birth in Russia.

The disgust and confusion which follow these "betrayals" add point to our criticism of leader worship; the workers lose more than they can possibly gain from the magnifying of the individual and dependence on his leadership. Having foolishly overrated, they now spitefully belittle the ability of their late members. What is however of rather more importance is the opportunity that offers here of justifying the position of the Socialist Party.

When the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia we alone of the organisations claiming to be socialist in this country, refused

to be swept off our feet either by hostile prejudice or by misguided enthusiasm. We never lent ourselves to capitalist condemnation of Bolshevik "violence," a pastime which was very popular with Labour men who had been preaching murder for the capitalist class during the war; nor did we deceive ourselves with unfounded hopes and mistake intentions for performances. We held that economic backwardness and the anti-socialist peasants would forbid the establishment of Socialism in Russia, and we held that the seizure of power by a minority could not succeed, and need not be attempted in Great Britain where political traditions, institutions and development had been so different. We were told that we were wrong, and the C.P.G.B. came into being to show how it could be done. Now, seven years after the initial success of the Bolsheviks, their too servile imitators are having to confess failure.

Walton Newbold writes ("Forward," Sept. 13th):—

From the autumn of 1920, although it was almost impossible to see it at the time, Capitalism had won, not only the advantage, but the decisive advantage, here in Britain as elsewhere.

There will be no further revolution in Europe for many a long year.

This is strange talk from one who discoursed then so glibly and learnedly on the "collapse of capitalism."

Philips Price, in whose judgment the communists were used to express the utmost confidence, takes up a similar attitude. He chides the communists with assuming

that the same process must be gone through in Western Europe as in Russia, where there never was a Parliamentary machine elected in geographical constituencies and on a democratic franchise. (Forward, August 30th.)

The editor of the "Workers' Weekly" tries to minimise the force of his argument by offering evidence to show that Newbold had for long been expressing more or less clearly the views on which he based his resignation. But what are we to think of a party which discovers only when a member resigns that the opinions he held years before are incompatible with the party's position?

In December, 1922, Newbold wrote this: "I, like my comrade Saklatvala, am a member of the Labour Party. Either as a member of the Fabian Society or of the I.L.P. or otherwise, I have been a member of that party without intermission since the autumn

of 1908. I have never had any cause to disagree with the Labour Party as such." ("Manchester Guardian," Dec. 7, 1922.)

And as a matter of fact, in December, 1923, the C.P.G.B.'s official attitude was to give unqualified support to all Labour candidates.

The Manifesto issued by the Executive Committee of the C.P.G.B. during the election contained an appeal to the workers to "Support the Labour and Communist candidates" without any kind of qualification. They themselves in the same issue of the "Communist Daily" which printed the appeal, boasted of the help their members were giving to such men as Jack Mills and John Hodge. Harry Pollitt, Communist candidate, withdrew in favour of the latter and spoke on his platform, although Hodge refused to give a satisfactory answer to the questions put by the unemployed. ("Communist Daily," 13th November, 1923.)

The Communist Party did and does support reactionary Labour men, but because Newbold wanted the criticism of these people to be confined to private meetings, and wrote that "the moment they came out there was to be no difference between the most extreme right men and left wingers like himself," he is denounced by the editor of the "Workers' Weekly" as "favouring the enemy" (12th Sept.). The charge is surely more damaging to the accuser than to the accused, for how does Newbold's policy differ from their own of denouncing Labour men at private Communist meetings and then going out to ask workers to vote for a Thomas or a "monstrous gnome" like Stephen Walsh, or allowing their members to appeal for votes on the strength of a letter from MacDonald, as did Paul in Manchester?

And it was the "Workers' Weekly" itself under Palme Dutte's editorship which published after the election an article by Newbold which contained the following:—

If we are not proud of Thomas as Thomas we shall be proud of him as a Labour Minister. Our business is to make him feel the responsibility, putting the stress on the first word "Labour," rather than the second word "Minister." In the next few months we shall have to do a great deal of barking back at the "boss" class, and as little as possible, I hope, of snapping at our leaders.

When, therefore, Palme Dutte goes on to say that in spite of Newbold's defection the Communist party "has no reason to revise



its attitude to the Labour Party," we cannot refrain from asking what on earth he means. Which of its half-dozen policies is the C.P. determined to persist in? The policy of 1921 of open hostility in theory, coupled in fact with the opposition to some (MacDonald) and the support of others (Naylor), or the policy of 1922 and 1923 of supporting them all where they needed support at election times, and keeping the denunciation where it could do no harm? Or the policy of support on the political field and opposition to the same persons and policies in the Trade Unions?

Palme Dutte can only reply that they will "persist in their policy." The fact is that the "tacticians" blundered again. They might themselves be proud of J. H. Thomas, but they soon found that the only people from whom they could expect to win support were not proud of him at all, and this explains why T. Johnson, who in January they considered to be a staunch fighter for the proletariat, is described in September as a "capitalist lackey," as are the ministers and other supporters of the Labour Government ("Workers' Weekly," 12th Sept.).

And it seems that Newbold and the rest of the "traitors" have the laugh after all. After they have been ridiculed for ignorance and denounced for their cowardice and treachery, they will still as Labour candidates receive the votes and assistance of C.P. members!

They cannot even condemn Newbold for his imperialist tendencies, for it was while he was "Communist" member for Motherwell in 1923 that he admits having defended the Navy as essential for the protection of "our food ships," and no public condemnation of him was made by his party. ("Forward," 30th August, 1924.)

It would also be interesting to know what is now supposed to be the attitude of the Communists on the question of minority revolution. Do they hold with Trotsky ("Communist," 6th Aug., 1921) that the victory of the working class "can only be achieved by the capacity to conduct battles, and above all by gaining over the majority of the working class." Or do they still believe that an "intellectual minority" can do the work? It was as recently as the end of 1923 that the German Communists made a futile attempt, in spite of the fact that their strength, as shown by the Reichstag elections, was only about 12 per cent. of the

votes cast. And the left wing who dominated the party (980 delegates to 369 of the others combined), referring to this rising, were still able to declare, in April, 1924, that "victory—the seizure of power by the workers—was not only possible, but historically necessary." ("Workers' Weekly," May 16th, 1924.)

In all this welter of confusion the S.P.G.B. stands alone and unshaken. I.L.P. pacifists join hands with Labour jingoes building cruisers to solve unemployment, and joyfully endorse in the Dawes Report a new attempt to intensify the slavery of the European working class; while Communists call them knaves, and vote them into Parliament.

The Communists, trying to emulate their fellow confusionists in the I.L.P., just hug themselves with delight because MacDonald has agreed to give a State guarantee of interest payments on a £40,000,000 loan to Russia, for the benefit of certain financial circles. One of their amusing arguments is that it will make work for the unemployed. They have doubtless overlooked the detail that even if work is provided for engineers now, the ultimate result when Russian agriculture has been reorganised and brought up to date by the imported machinery, is that this and other countries will have to face the competition of cheap Russian wheat. This will be good news for the unemployed agricultural workers. While the Communist propagates futile "solutions" of insoluble problems, the Socialist goes on propagating socialism.

We extend an urgent invitation to those who have seen the Socialist Party stand the test of war and would-be revolution and yet maintain the intellectual strength of its position, to come forward and give us their active assistance.

### RAMSAY MACDONALD'S ATTACK ON THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE AGAINST CAPITAL.

MacDonald has written a new preface to a new edition of his book, "Socialism, Critical, and Constructive." Its denunciation of the workers because they attempt resistance to the encroachments of the employing class has pleased the latter and correspondingly startled many who had never before found cause to doubt the integrity of their leader.

Below are some extracts:—

Profiteering has become universal and action has shown a deplorable tendency to centre in self. The evil has not been confined to the classes generally designated as "profiteers," but has infected all sections.

The trade unionist has the same limitation imposed upon him in this respect as the capitalist—he cannot advance his interests at the expense of his society. No system of thought except Socialism not only makes these limitations of wise action clear, but indicates the method by which Labour may obtain justice.

It cannot be over-emphasised that public doles, Poplarism, strikes for increased wages, limitation of output, not only are not Socialism, but may mislead the spirit and the policy of the Socialist movement.

Socialism calls men to give unstinted service in return for a reasonable reward measured in terms of life, and no one should be more impatient than the Socialist with the fallacy that a man cannot be expected to give the service before he gets the reward.

The Socialist, therefore, looks with some misgivings upon some recent developments in the conflicts between Capital and Labour. They are contrary to his spirit; he believes they are both immoral and uneconomic and will lead to disaster.

It is only when the worker by brain or by hand does his best for society that he will create in society that sympathy and support without which the Labour movement will never attain its goal.

There is no need to criticise these extracts in detail. The worker will recognise in them the arguments used by every exploiter and defender of exploiters, as usual cleverly mixed up with an element of indisputable truth. Of course, no one supposes that strikes, doles and relief, and limitation of output are either Socialism or are in themselves desirable. They are not Socialism any more than they are capitalism. Doles and relief are merely part of the industrial "red cross service" which the capitalists are compelled to organise in order to deal with the increasing number of destitute victims of the capitalist system. Strikes and ca'canny are defensive weapons used by the workers against the employing class. They are difficult, costly, and sometimes dangerous to those who use them, but they are justified if, on the whole, the gains, in the shape of concessions from the masters, are greater than the cost to the workers in loss of wages, hardship, etc.

Capitalism is a system of society in which the wealthy property-owner lives without working, and the poverty-stricken worker toils to provide the wealth of the propertied class. The capitalist to maintain so delightful a situation, makes use of the lock-out, limitation of output, and, if need be,

the open legal violence of the armed forces. The workers, driven to desperation, make such feeble resistance as they are able, not because the action is in itself something desirable but because it is necessary. It is this which MacDonald sees fit to condemn.

If these actions were in addition, the means of attaining Socialism they would be more than justified from a working-class standpoint, however obnoxious to MacDonald and his masters. Our criticism is that the real way out of the evils of capitalism is simpler and easier than strikes or ca'canny. Given socialist knowledge, the workers have within their grasp the power to control Parliament and the rest of the political machinery, and that control would enable them to establish Socialism. In the meantime they ought and must struggle to defend their standard of living against the employers' attacks. This and the struggle for power is the class struggle which the socialist recognises as the basis of the political parties and political disputes of modern society.

Even Brailsford, editor of the "New Leader" (19th Sept.), had to protest against MacDonald's words, and was reduced to offering the paltry excuse that MacDonald is a "very tired man." If MacDonald only writes anti-socialist drivel when he is "tired," then he cannot be the man of vigour his biographers represent him to be. But Brailsford deserves our thanks for a delicious little story he tells illustrating the mentality of the I.L.P. membership.

In his youth he once made the almost fatal mistake of referring to the "class struggle" at an I.L.P. meeting. Then "one of our veteran leaders came to me when I sat down, and whispered in his kindly fatherly way (though I had shocked him deeply) 'We never speak of the class struggle in the I.L.P.'"

But to be serious again, what MacDonald writes is indeed a piece of staggering impudence. He forgets that he has enjoyed a standard of comfort far above that of the trade unionists whom he charges with profiteering, and it does not fall to their lot to receive the Cabinet Minister's salary granted by a grateful ruling class to treacherous Labour leaders.

And while we are on the subject of "profiteering," we suggest that MacDonald might fittingly offer his advice to his



generous friend Sir A. Grant. He it was who endowed a library, open-heartedly made MacDonald a gift of £1,500 a year for life, and received a Baronetcy.

He also it is whose firm has the reputation of being one of the most grinding exploiters in the biscuit-making industry.

R.

## SOCIALISM AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

### A CRITIC ANSWERED.

15, Grenville Street,  
Dublin.

Dear Comrade,

As a member of the working class, I am very interested in your party and the Socialist Standard. Some months ago a member of your party was in this town and he left a few of us thinking. For myself I must say that the Socialist Party of Great Britain has very little chance of ever making the working-class Socialists. First, because they do not definitely take their place among the workers and engage in the struggle between the workers and the capitalist class which is unceasing, rather do they preach that nothing except the political battle matter, forgetting that without the economic and the defence forces of the working class movement parliaments, or political institutions are valueless as the capitalist could afford to laugh at the attempts of a band of politicians trying to control the implements that are in his hands. The only hope that Socialism may be achieved is in a combination of all the industrial workers organised as a class together with the defence forces that it will have to fashion in its own defence, and lastly the use, if necessary, as a supplement political action. Propaganda for political action will be helped as the struggle of the class conscious and organised workers goes on. My chief idea in writing was to urge that sectarianism inside the working class should cease and that small bodies like the S.P.G.B. ought to get into the Labour movement and put their influence on the side of unity, otherwise there will be doubts as to their sincerity. In this town the S.P.G.B. has one individual as a member, and there are intelligent young men calling themselves Communists. He and they are a group who unite in their refusal to assist the mass of the workers who are out for the Workers' Republic. Why do such people, Communists and Socialists, anger the working class by their hair-splitting differences? Why is it that capitalists whom we are trying to down manage to keep united while we are divided, yet we are all out for working class control of the means and instruments of production and distribution? Therefore I would urge that inside the working class is your place.

Yours fraternally,

P. CUNNINGHAM.

### REPLY TO P. CUNNINGHAM.

Your letter has been passed on to me for reply, but I find reply difficult because your

letter contains only baseless assertions and muddled ideas.

In the first place, capitalist conditions make socialists; we only assist the educational work of conditions.

You say that we do not take our place among the workers in the struggle. I don't know where you get your information from, but you are evidently badly misinformed. The members of the S.P.G.B. are working men and working women. They work in factories, mills and workshops, and take part with their fellow workers in the daily and weekly struggle for the best conditions of labour that can be obtained. But while doing so they point out the limits of this struggle and the impossibility of overthrowing capitalism by industrial methods. They therefore agitate among their fellows for political action. In the S.P.G.B. they are organised for the political struggle; class-conscious revolutionary action for the establishment of Socialism.

What do you mean by "the economic and the defence forces of the working-class movement"? There is only one force that is worthy of a moment's consideration—the force that operates as powder and shot, bombs, poison gas, and so forth; the force that is bottled up in aeroplanes, battleships, and tanks; the murderous force that can blow thousands of us to bits and spread ruin and desolation over large territories in the wink of an eye. Have the experiences of war, of strikes, and of battering of native populations taught you nothing? And this mighty death-dealing machine is operated from parliament—in Britain, from the House of Commons. They can crush any working-class uprising almost before the workers have begun to move, as many a man, eating his heart out in prison, has learnt to his sorrow.

Now what can the workers bring to combat this political machine? Nothing but empty stomachs and brickbats. Their wages are not sufficient to enable them to purchase anything beyond a few rifles, and any attempt to manufacture munitions (which could only be done on such a small scale as to be valueless) or to tamper with the soldiers or sailors would, and has been, rapidly met with a term of imprisonment. Up against the political machinery the workers are helpless, and yet, the irony of it, they can obtain control of this machinery as soon as they wish.

On the industrial field the workers are faced with the misery and demoralisation produced by repeated failures. On the political field they are faced with complete success as soon as they are clear about the objective and the way to obtain it. It is easier to organise workers effectively for sound political action than it is to organise them for industrial action alone, because in the one direction complete success is within their grasp, whilst in the other ultimate defeat is certain. The two positions can easily be demonstrated by illustrations that will satisfy the average worker, who is not either a blind worshipper of idols or empty phrases, or whose head is not filled with the fatal delusions of the communist.

To take another of your points. The implements of production are in the possession of the capitalist because he can resist by force any attempt made by the workers to take them. That is why the capitalist laughs. But when the workers, through delegates they control, take possession of the force the laugh will disappear, as it disappeared from the faces of the people composing each class that in the past lost political power and with it economic ownership. Space is too limited for me to give illustrations of this fact here, but you have only to ask and you will receive plenty of illustrations in a future number of this paper.

You ask us to unite with others in "the Labour movement." But for what are we to unite? Mere unity is meaningless by itself. Are we to unite with the Labour Party to help the capitalists to obtain more profits and the workers to become more docile slaves? Are we to unite with people like J. R. Clynes? He is, president of the League of the British Commonwealth that has issued a leaflet stating:

The "League of the British Commonwealth" demands, therefore, the nationalisation of our principal banks as the only permanent remedy for unemployment; but this does not imply or involve the nationalisation of land, industry, or anything else.

Masses of workers are Liberals, masses are Conservatives; do you want us to unite with either or both of these? You see, unity depends upon the objective and the means to obtain the objective. But I am forgetting, you consider political action to be useless, therefore I presume you are not in favour of uniting with bodies that urge the workers to action you consider useless?

If this is so, take care you are not throwing a boomerang. Take care some members of the Labour Party may not be accusing you of "splitting the ranks."

From your letter it would appear that the fraction you favour is that rapidly diminishing quantity going under the name of Communist. But it is difficult to find out on what policy one could unite with the Communists, except on the policy of finding out that one is constantly making mistakes and must start again with a new shibboleth—rather a barren outlook you must admit.

You say the mass of the workers are out for the Workers' Republic. Wake up, friend, your blissful dreams are far, far away from the truth. The mass of the workers are, alas, supporters of capitalism, and your foolish statement suggests to me that you mix very little with your fellow workers. Come down from your attic of dreams and learn the realities of life before tendering advice to those who are engaged in the struggle for Socialism.

You wind up with the absurd statement that "we are all out for working-class control of the means and instruments of production and distribution." If this is so, why all the fuss and propaganda? And why, above all, isn't Socialism here now? Anyhow who are the "we" to whom you refer?

Finally people may be "out for" many things but the point is are they acting in a way that will obtain for them the object of their desires? I might be "out" to visit France but if I started from the North of England to swim there via Greenland there would not be much likelihood of my arrival. The means cannot be separated from the end. There are many people who claim to be "out for" Socialism, but their actions give the lie to the claim and push farther into the future the wished-for objective. The Labour Party, for instance, who urged the workers to take part in the late war, and who engage the attention of workers upon a multitude of questions that are of no value. Then there are also the Communists, who change their minds every few weeks; continually find out that they have been making mistakes; ask the workers to trust them completely, and then work might and main to drive the workers into the shambles.

We are of the working class, inside the working class, and working our hardest to



assist our fellow workers to understand that in Socialism lies their only salvation; and that the only way to obtain Socialism, once understanding and desiring it, is to capture the political machinery from the capitalist so that we can dispossess them of the power they wield and the wealth they have stolen.

GILMAC.

### SOME QUESTIONS ON SOCIALIST POLICY.

A correspondent (F. L. Remington, of Leicester) in sending us his views on current politics, asks some questions relative to Socialist policy. These matters have been dealt with in the Socialist Standard before, but as they may be of interest at the present time we are replying to the questions here.

#### (1) DOES THE S.P.G.B. TAKE PART IN MUNICIPAL POLITICS?

The answer to this question is contained in our Declaration of Principles, which declares for the conquest of the powers of government, local and national.

The master class spend huge sums to control local bodies, as these are a sub-division of the government of capitalism. It is important for the masters to control these councils, etc., and therefore it is equally important to dislodge the capitalists from power wherever they control.

The waging of the class struggle involves the conquest by the workers of the institutions of control, and hence Socialists must fight for conquest of local and national machinery of government. We do not take part in municipal elections to administer capitalism, but to advance the interests of Socialism. The Socialist Party municipal election address tells the workers how little could be gained in improvements while capitalism lasts, and therefore in local as well as national elections we ask for votes from those alone who realise that the abolition of the present system and replacement by Socialism is the only hope of the working class. Socialists if elected to municipal bodies would use them as vantage points in the class struggle and to sound the message of Socialism to the unconverted workers.

#### (2) WHAT IS OUR OPPOSITION TO THE S.L.P.?

The answer is contained in our Party Manifesto, and in many articles in the

Socialist Standard during the years when the S.L.P. was an active body. Our opposition to the S.L.P. may be summarised thus: (1) Their lack of understanding of the class struggle shown by their reliance on industrial action as the workers' remedy. (2) Their muddle-headed and continually changing views on fundamental points of policy, such as war, soviets, unity stunts, etc. (3) Lacking sound views on Socialist policy, they have simply followed the ups and downs of the American S.L.P., and are not evidently able to take up a consistent and firmly grounded Socialist position.

#### (3) WHAT ABOUT TAKING THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS?

The answer to that question is implied in the Socialist need for getting political control. If we are to refuse to take oaths, then there is no chance for controlling parliament. The questioner does not fully realise the implications of the class struggle. Socialists are not simply waging war against detail grievances in the system. They are fighting against the system as a whole. As political action is necessary to workers' triumph, Socialists cannot stop at taking oaths imposed upon them by the ruling class. There is nothing revolutionary in fighting against oaths, and by concentrating the electorates' attention on the oath, Socialism is left aside as the issue. Republicans and Atheists like Bradlaugh can refuse\* to take oaths, although they are bitter anti-Socialists.

The taking of oaths imposed by ruling classes has never prevented them being ignored when interest dictated it. The English Revolution of the 17th century was carried through in Parliament by men who took oaths to Kings they beheaded or drove from the throne.

Constitutionalists in Russia took oaths to the Czar and his Government in several Dumas, but that did not prevent them from breaking their oaths when opportunity presented itself, and so abolishing the Czar's rule. In times of revolution in every country oaths have been broken by those who have been compelled to swear allegiance to the ruling power of the time. If Socialists are to keep out of Parliament because of formal matters of procedure, then the rul-

\*Bradlaugh refused to take the oath at first but was willing afterwards. Then, however, the Government refused to let him take the oath.

ing class can keep on imposing conditions which they think you will refuse.

Our correspondent's idea is that the propaganda value of refusing to take the oath would be great. Possibly he is correct in this. But it would not be propaganda for Socialism or for the working class. It would be propaganda against the oath, and would not rouse or involve a class issue.

It would appeal to reformers, anti-monarchists, anarchists, and atheists, etc., people generally who are busy fighting effects or dealing with one aspect of capitalism.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

### "THE CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE."—(1848—1850).

By Karl Marx.

(Published by the New York Labor News Co. : \$2.00.)

Translated by Henry Kuhn.

A melancholy significance attaches to this volume, as the long preface was the last thing Engels wrote for publication before his death in 1895.

The work consists of four articles, originally published in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1850, or just after the events recorded had taken place. The masterly analysis of the course of those events, with the penetration into the causes of the defeat of the working class, are all in Marx's best style. While he was the first to recognise this defeat and its causes, the wide area of the revolution occurring in the principal countries of Europe, misled both himself and Engels as to the period when the working class would march to victory.

In this volume are given the details and materials, that were again briefly surveyed and summed up, after the *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte, in the famous "*Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*."

"The Class Struggles in France" form an introduction to the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, while the latter sums up the whole period 1848-1851 in the light of the later developments. The two works are thus complementary and should be studied together for a full understanding of that exciting period.

To-day this study is of special importance in view of the claims made by certain self-styled "leaders" of the working class for the use of methods and tactics that these

volumes show to be completely useless in present day conditions.

It is here that Engels' splendid preface is so valuable. Written 45 years after the events referred to above, Engels could show how true were the main sections of the analysis, while admitting the errors in forecast made by Marx and himself. But it is on the question of the tactics to be used by the working class that the greatest lessons are to be learnt. The view held by the Independent Labour Party and the Communist Party that Socialism will be established by an "intelligent minority" leading the masses of the workers, looks curious in face of the following statement on p. 9:—

The proletarian masses themselves, even after their Paris victory, were absolutely at sea as to the course to be pursued. And yet there was the movement—instinctive, spontaneous, irrepressible. Was not that just the situation wherein the revolution must succeed, led by a minority it is true, but this time not in the interests of that minority but in the most specific interests of the majority.

This statement might have been taken today from one of the papers of the two organisations mentioned. But with pitiless logic Engels points out on p. 10:—

History has proved us wrong and all others who thought similarly. It has made clear that the status of economic development on the Continent was then by no means ripe for the abolition of capitalist production.

Yet some who claim to have studied Marx's teachings try to argue that it is possible to establish Socialism under economic conditions far less ripe than those existing in 1848, and with a working class much inferior in knowledge to those of France in that day.

Equally crushing is Engels' exposure of the absurdity of supposing that the working class can oppose the Army and Navy with weapons of physical force, in street fights, as advocated by many Communists and Anarchists. After analysing the revolts in the various capitals of Europe, and showing why temporary successes in some places was followed by defeat in all of them, he says:—

Since then much more has been changed, all in favour of the military. If the cities have become larger, so have the armies. Paris and Berlin, since 1848, have quadrupled, but their garrisons have grown more than that. These garrisons, by means of the railroads, may be doubled inside of twenty-four hours, and in forty-eight hours may swell to gigantic armies. The armament of these enormously augmented troops has become incomparably more effective. In 1848 the smooth bore,



muzzle-loaded percussion rifle, to-day the small calibre, magazine breech loader, shooting four times as far, ten times as accurately, and ten times as quickly as the former. At that time the solid projectiles and case shot of the artillery with relatively weak effect, to-day the percussion shell, one of which suffices to shatter the best barricade. . . . Even if on the side of the insurrection there be more trained soldiers, it will become more difficult to arm them. The hunting and sporting rifles of the warehouses—even if the police has not rendered them useless by the removal of a part of the mechanism—are no match for the magazine rifle of the soldier, even at close quarters.—(Pages 22-23.)

If this was true twenty-nine years ago, how much more does it apply to-day when in addition to all the above advantages, the modern army possesses poison gas, aeroplanes and bombs. What was considered by Engels as a lunatic's action then, can only be considered as quite brainless to-day. Yet such action still has its advocates!

The final view of the veteran who had lived and taken part in so many stirring events, whose immense knowledge and great intellect were combined in a calm survey of the conditions around him, is given on page 24:—

The time is past for revolutions carried through by small minorities at the head of unconscious masses. When it gets to be a matter of the complete transformation of the social organization, the masses themselves must participate, must understand what is at stake and why they are to act. That much the history of the last fifty years has taught us. But so that the masses may understand what is to be done, long and persistent work is required, and it is this work that we are now performing with results that drive our enemies to despair.

Such is the lesson this volume drives home. In view of its value to the workers, it is a great pity it has not been produced in a cheaper form. The price, at the present rate of exchange, is about 10/-, a sum beyond the power of most workers to pay for a book of 200 pages.

J. F.

#### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS LONDON DISTRICT.

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 6 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 6 p.m.  
Leytonstone, The Green Man, 11.30 a.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 3 p.m.

**Mondays:** Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.  
Garnault Place, Clerkenwell, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Friday:** Stratford, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Tooting, Church Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Baths), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Edmonton, The Green, 8 p.m.

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## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

### OBJECT.

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

## Declaration of Principles.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

#### HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE SOCIALIST VERSUS THE VOTE CATCHER.

Some few years ago, in the suburb known as Battenham, there lived a poor workman whose name was Hyam Eezi. He was poor in that his clothing was shoddy, his food coarse and adulterated, his habitation mean, inconvenient and hired by the week, his hold upon life so precarious that starvation or pauperism were ever on the horizon. He owned no land: nor anything beyond the rags upon his back and the few articles of utility with which he had furnished his hired house.

He himself lived by letting himself upon hire, the process being as follows. Being possessed of nothing material beyond the few poor articles mentioned, and driven by the stern goad of hunger, he found that he still possessed one saleable thing—his energy. He had read no history, so he did not know how he and those around him had become landless, propertyless outcasts in a land of plenty. He just took things as he found them, and imagined that thus they had ever been, and thus would remain. And so his main concern was to find some hirer of human labour, and lend his services to him for as long a time as possible and for as large a sum as possible. Unfortunately he found that so many hundreds of those around him were in like case, that the hirers were enabled to select those who would take the smallest sum, or alternatively those who could work the hardest or most skilfully. He, therefore, found that, no matter how hard he worked or at what occupation, the sum he received each week barely sufficed to keep him and his family in

their poor standard of "comfort" and security. Security! Ever before him there loomed the prospect of finding in his pay envelope a little slip of paper, bearing the dread intimation that his services were no longer necessary. What puzzled him, when he really did sit down to think the matter out, was the undoubted fact that when he and his mates had worked so hard that the warehouses were overflowing with goods, then was the most likely time for the "sack," as they called it. Terms like "over-production," "slump," "glutted markets," etc., filtered down to him, but he had but the haziest idea of what they all meant. The hunt for a master began anew. Presently he found one; or after an interval of semi-starvation the old one took him back again. The process is repeated, and so the years pass.

And then a great excitement stirs his drab life. There is an Election. Certain shiny-hatted, sleek, comfortable looking gentlemen appear, and profess to take an absorbing interest in his welfare. All his troubles, he is told, are directly traceable to Free Imports, lack of Preference, want of Stability, Foreign Competition, and the Crass Stupidity of the existing Government. The remedy is quite simple. Just put a little cross opposite the shiny-hatted gentleman's name, and Prosperity will dawn upon all.

The next few years are spent in continuing to hire himself out when fortunate enough to find a hirer, and in wondering when the promised Prosperity will arrive, or what



form it was supposed to take. Suddenly the mystery is solved. He has been betrayed, swindled, duped. How does he know that? Another gentleman is good enough to devote much of his spare time to patiently explaining what is wrong. A rash of handbills, cards, posters, etc., has broken out, and he gathers that another Election is arranged for him. The gentleman explains that the individual who cajoled his vote from him last time is one of an unscrupulous gang of self-seekers who are bent on ruining the country. They are hypocrites, liars and fools, their sole aim being the feathering of their own nests at the expense of the honest working man. "What have they done for you," he asks searchingly. Hyam has no difficulty in replying, "Nothing." Fortunately the remedy is simple. This gentleman stands for Peace, Retrenchment and Reform; Economy, Progress and a Free Breakfast Table; Justice, Liberty and No Tariffs. The mellifluous flow of high-sounding words leaves Hyam slightly dazed. They are not part of his everyday vocabulary and he cannot connect them with any article of use in his daily life, unless it be the Free Breakfast Table. That sounds promising, anyhow. He can't do less than the previous blighter, thinks Hyam, so here goes my vote for the gent that has shown him up.

It is needless to recount how the ship of prosperity again seemed to have mistaken the harbour and put into some more distant haven. The cause of this was made clear as crystal to our friend Hyam Eezi by a simple working man. The occasion was another General Election, and this man proved in the most convincing manner that the previous two gentlemen were arrant swindlers, both of them employers of labour and consequently living upon the ill-gotten wealth they sweated from the honest workers. What we wanted was a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, also pensions for mothers, also no taxes on food, also better education. What we wanted was Peace in Europe; Houses to let at low Rents; No Profiteering; No Inhabited House Duty; No Entertainment Tax; Larger Unemployment Dole; More Scholarships; Cheap Electricity; Sugar Beet Factories, and, above all, No Unemployment.

Who could resist it? Not Hyam Eezi! Here was a man of his own class, who

talked his own language. Here were things he could understand. Houses at low rents! No Profiteering! No Unemployment! These were ideas he could handle. And the remedy was so exquisitely simple. Just put a little cross opposite this honest toiler's name and the Dawn was guaranteed visible within a few short weeks. God! would polling day never arrive?

Alas! The months have gone by with little to distinguish them from the drab years before. Hyam still hires himself out when he can find a hirer, and starves when he can't. The honest working man of his last choice is painfully explaining to him how the main caravan missed its way, but how grateful he should be for what has been salvaged. The capitalists of France and of Germany are on much better terms; the capitalists of England and of France are happier together; the "socialist" capitalists of Russia and the ordinary capitalists of England are in a fair way to doing business; the low-rented houses are, er—on paper; the thirty million pounds (think of it, Hyam!) a year off food taxes has reduced the cost of living, except where it has gone up; the landlord has been freed of the irritating Inhabited House Duty; your seat at the "pictures" has gone down a whole penny—in some places; we have increased the pittance to ex-Service men whom we sent to be butchered in the War; we have —, but Hyam is bewildered. He asks himself what all this means to him. Receiving no answer, he seeks out one of those "extremist" fellows who works in the same shop, and inquires rather irrelevantly: "Where the devil are we, mate?"

"Mate" replies: "Look here, Hyam boy, the main thing that's wrong is yourself. All these loquacious gentlemen have had one thing in common. They have invited you to trust them. You have done so; that is why you now find yourself 'trussed.' Your trouble is glaringly thrust in your face every morning, but you are so used to it, you don't notice it. You 'book-on,' or 'clock-on' at a definite time, and after some hours have gone, you 'book-off.' But you feel different, don't you? Something has gone from you; you are tired; you have less energy. There you have it. The firm have had so many hours of your energy—and what have they given you in exchange? A wage. And what does a wage represent? The cost of replac-

ing the energy, plus a bit to enable you to bring up kiddies to take your place. Many factors make wages vary, but the point round which they vary is the average cost of living. So you see, Hyam, you are a thing of hire, a piece of merchandise, a commodity. In selling your energy, you sell yourself, for you are inseparable. You sell yourself—a piece at a time; and when your energy thins off, you are scrapped. Foreign Agreements don't help you; Russian and German Loans don't help you. You still remain a worker. The whole collection of Pensions, Insurances, Health Benefits, etc., do not really affect you. You remain a worker. Cheap rents, cheap food, low rents, low taxes, cheap everything, do not affect you. Cheap cost of living means cheap wages. With any wages, high or low, you remain a worker. And that is the whole trouble. Palliatives do not palliate; 'benefits' do not benefit; 'something now' means next to nothing for ever.

"The system under which we live is called Capitalism. Under it the land, factories and means by which we all live are owned by small groups of people. The workers, the great mass of the people, hire themselves out to the capitalist at so much per day, per week or per month. The result of their toil goes to the owners of the tools of production; the workers get their hire. When the capitalists cannot make a profit out of the hire of labour they stop hiring it and the labourer starves. Starving men are desperate men, so good, kind capitalism arranges a scheme of Insurance, that just sufficiently dulls the edge of desperation to secure the continuance of the system of capitalism. Your Labour party has sounded the loud trumpet over their having increased this "benefit." You can read this little lesson for yourself, can't you.

"The Socialist says there is one problem, and one problem only, before the worker: his wage-slavery. There is one solution and one solution only for his problem; that he and his fellows must own the means whereby they all live. To do this they must capture the political machinery of society—Parliament—not by trusting to any glib-tongued orator to do something for them, but by organising in the workers' party, the Socialist Party, to capture and use the political machinery in the interests of the whole working class. That is a very brief outline

of Socialism, and if it appeals to you, don't trust any more to people who are going to bring Utopia here without the least effort on your part, but come into the Socialist Party and work for Socialism. Socialism will come when enough of you want it. Why not begin to work now, Hyam?"

W. T. H.

## WHY SOCIALISTS OPPOSE NATIONALISATION.

### THE CASE AGAINST GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP.

The Socialist propagandist is frequently asked by opponents, and by those who sympathise but are only slightly acquainted with the Socialist case, to defend "Nationalisation." It is usually with surprise that the enquirer learns that the Socialist Party is not in favour of, but opposed to, the many forms of State or Municipal ownership.

While a few Conservatives, considerable numbers of Liberals, the bulk of the Labour Party, and the I.L.P. are advocates of Nationalisation, the Socialist Party does not hold that the workers can usefully support this demand. Our general reason is one that lies at the back of all our principles, that is, that Nationalisation will not benefit the workers. It is a matter of complete indifference to us whether this or any other proposal is, or is not, useful to the other class, the employers.

What, then, is Nationalisation? Let us take the mining industry as an illustration. At present certain moneyed people, capitalists, invest part of their capital in the lease of coal-bearing soil, machinery, etc., and use part in employing miners and clerks and managers to carry on the various processes connected with the hewing, hauling, sale, and distribution of coal. After they have paid wages and all expenses, they expect to, and actually do, receive in the price of their coal an amount greater than the total they have spent on getting and selling it. The difference between income and expenditure goes into the pockets of the shareholders or owners as profits or dividends, and this happens irrespective of whether those shareholders have or have not any knowledge of coal-getting, and irrespective of whether they spend the whole of their time idling and enjoying themselves, or whether they take an active interest in the



concern in which their money is invested. Generally speaking, the amount of their profits depends not on their own efforts, but on the amount of capital they happen to possess.

This is the normal organisation of the capitalist system in its undeveloped or "competitive" stage, and it is objected to by us and by the advocates of Nationalisation. The agreement between us, however, does not go very far. We object to the control of the means of life being in the hands of non-workers. We object to the owners of capital being permitted to consume part of the wealth the workers have produced while they take no active part in production themselves. We hold that society can now dispense with the capitalist class, because they no longer perform any function which cannot be performed at least as well by members of the working class, by which we mean all those people who, because they do not possess property, are compelled to offer their services to those who do. We do not regard the investment of capital as a service which entitles the owner to live at the expense of those who do the work. We therefore advocate Socialism, which is a social system in which every able-bodied person will be expected to engage in wealth production before he earns the right to enjoy the use of those things which society can provide for its members. Society itself will set aside wealth in the form of machinery, etc., for the purpose of future production, instead of paying a privileged class for permission to use the results of the workers' past labour, as is done at present. The capitalist class will cease to exist.

This is Socialism, but it is not Nationalisation. Nationalisation, or Municipalisation, is said to exist when the State or some local authority takes over or initiates an undertaking instead of leaving it in the hands of any capitalist or group of capitalists who choose to invest their money in it. Thus the railways in Germany, the Post Office and Telegraphs in Great Britain, and butchers' shops, sawmills, and other concerns under Labour Governments in Australia, are nationalised. This development is a natural successor in certain industries to the early competitive stage of capitalism. For instance, the overwhelming importance to a great trading nation of efficient means of communication and transport makes it imperative that private individuals shall not be

entitled to act quite irresponsibly. The result of leaving such industries in individual hands would have been a chaotic lack of organisation which, while profitable enough to the owners, would have been fatal to those industries which needed cheap and, above all, dependable and widespread transport services. In self-interest, therefore, the capitalist class as a whole, through their Governments, had to step in and either take over, or at least control, those services which had become too big and important to be left in individual hands without grave danger to the stability without which trade would be impossible. There may, of course, be other reasons for the introduction of national control. Bismarck took over the German railways partly for military purposes, partly in order to have a source of income outside the control of the German Parliament, and lastly, because he hoped with centralised control to be able to deal more effectively with any attempted insurrection by the German workers. He and other Continental Ministers have used bureaucratic control to stamp out Socialist propaganda by penalising the active workers, and by denying State employees ordinary political rights. In France, State employees, like those in most Continental State concerns, have been denied the right to organise or to strike, and have been compelled to carry on blackleg services by the simple device of calling them to the colours. Sometimes in wartime and only during that emergency it becomes imperative for other industries temporarily to be put under the sole control of the Government. This happened here during the last war.

Again, it may happen that, owing to changed world conditions, new inventions or some such reason, a powerful group of capitalists may be faced with the threatened loss of the whole capital invested in an industry, as might happen, for instance, if oil fuel completely replaced coal. In such circumstances the owners, if powerful enough, would become enthusiastic supporters of Nationalisation, in the hope that they might get compensation and pass their losses on to the State. A circular recently issued by a firm of Leicester stockbrokers to their clients, explaining why they favoured Nationalisation of the mines, may very well be dictated by a fear of this kind. (See August issue.)

There is yet another frequent explanation of capitalist enthusiasm for State control.

La Follette, who is running as Third Party candidate for the U.S.A. Presidency, is an old-fashioned representative of capitalist interests who regards trusts and combines as a departure from the early "purity" of the capitalist system, and he wants the Government to intervene and, if necessary, take over certain vital industries. He is getting quite an unexpected amount of support from a host of small capitalists, manufacturers, farmers, etc., who are being slowly throttled by the banking, railway, and other rings, and who wish to put back the economic development of society. In this country we have Mr. Clynes, who believes, like La Follette, that it is better to have a large number of small capitalists than a small number of large capitalists. (Preface to the "Failure of Karl Marx.")

Now, if you examine all the schemes put forward by these various advocates of Nationalisation you will see why it is that the Socialist opposes them. They all of them perpetuate the very feature which is essential to capitalism and which leads us to seek the abolition of the system. We do not hold that capitalism would be all right if only profits were limited to 5 per cent. or 1 per cent., or that it would be all right if trusts were abolished or prevented from charging high prices. We know very well that it is the system itself which is the cause of the chief economic evils from which the workers suffer, and these were as bad, and in some respects far worse, before trusts and combines had been heard of. We do not share the pathetic belief of the "Daily Herald" in 1923 (November 12th, 1923, and following days) that capitalism would be all right and there would be no unemployment if only wages were higher. Their unfortunate example was America, but we learn from the "Daily Herald" of October 23rd that there are now more than 5,000,000 unemployed in that country in spite of "high wages." For the Socialist, capitalism is the enemy; not big capitalists or little capitalists, not high wages or low wages, not efficient or inefficient capitalism, but simply capitalism. And the essential feature of capitalism is reproduced in all these nationalisation proposals. IN ALL OF THEM THE CAPITALIST INVESTOR IS STILL GOING TO BE ALLOWED TO LIVE ON THE PROCEEDS OF HIS INVESTMENT. The only difference—a minor one—is that he will receive interest on

Government or Municipal Bonds instead of receiving profits or dividends on ordinary company shares. He will still be able to live without working, and the system which permits this will still be the capitalist system.

The main underlying cause of the worker's poverty is the private ownership of the means of producing material wealth. The class that lives by owning, maintains its position because it controls the political machinery and can invoke the aid of the armed forces whenever necessary. The remedy can only be the abolition of private ownership, and this can be done only in face of the opposition of the present owners. Examine Nationalisation proposals on these three claims: (1) That it solves the whole problem. (2) That it improves the workers' position within the present system. (3) That it makes the final solution easier than it would otherwise be.

The "Daily Herald" (July 27th, 1923), under the heading "Socialism at Work," instanced the Port of London Authority as a Socialist success. "... What Socialists propose is to set up other bodies like this very enterprising and energetic Port of London Authority." It has on other occasions mentioned in the same connection the Post Office, and Municipal tramways, electricity undertakings, etc. Now, are these things Socialism, or do they as Socialists contend, merely alter superficially the form of the capitalist system?

First, let us take Mr. Herbert Morrison, Secretary of the London Labour Party. "The Port of London Authority was established by Mr. Lloyd George some years ago to enable the capitalists of the Port to have the advantages of public credit and to do for themselves collectively what they and a number of private companies had been unable to do with success individually. ... The Port of London Authority is a capitalistic Soviet ... the constitution of which is thoroughly objectionable from the Labour and Socialist point of view, and which has certainly not been as friendly to the workers of the Port of London as it might have been" ("Daily Herald," July 30th, 1923). The last remark refers, of course, to the many strikes to enforce better working conditions. We do not care to question the "Herald's" assertion that "By the unanimous admission of the capitalist Press it works exceedingly well." It is, however, sufficient to say that the



capitalist Press does not usually describe in these terms anything which is likely to benefit the workers at the expense of their employers. Next, I am going to quote another Labour supporter, Mr. G. T. Sadler, LL.B., writing in the "Herald" on the subject of the capitalist nature of Municipal undertakings (April 2nd, 1924):—

"Many socialists have the idea that by municipalisation they can get rid of capitalists. May I remind such that by municipalisation you *create* State capitalists? This process has been long going on in all our chief towns. Take a few examples—

The debt of—	
L.C.C. is	£105,000,000
Lincoln	1,667,000
Liverpool	22,000,000
Manchester	31,000,000
Leicester	4,995,000

"On all this interest is paid, say, 5 or 4 or less per cent.—to capitalists!"

Mr. Sadler is wrong in only one respect—in thinking that Socialists share this Labour Party idea.

To show how completely many critics of the capitalist system miss the really vital feature is well illustrated by another reform of capitalism advocated by the Labour Party. In the "Daily Herald" (October 20th, 1924), Mr. Emil Davies has an article in which he holds up for the imitation of English workers a milk-distributing co-operative society formed four years ago in Minneapolis. He says: "Those who produce and those who distribute the necessities of life" will, in the co-operative commonwealth, "not be the wage slaves of people who allow the real workers a mere subsistence, and themselves take large profits which enable them to live in luxury." He then goes on to tell us that this concern, employing only 400 workers, actually made £40,000 profit last year! He admits that the workers who formed it could raise only trifling amounts of capital themselves, and it was to outsiders that they had to go to start the business. Thus they began operations with promises and actual investments totalling £23,000, and it is of course mainly to these investors that the profit goes. If this instance of intensive exploitation were really what Socialists aim at, the workers might justly detest the name of Socialism. In fact, co-operative capitalism is open to the same criticism as State capitalism or any other variant of the wages system. And as Mr. J. A. Spender, the Liberal economist, correctly says, "the MacDonald-Webb School of Socialists . . . would disown the

Marxian doctrine. . . . These men have no economic doctrine about wealth or its distribution between classes, and are more correctly called State-capitalists than Socialists" ("Weekly Westminster," October 25th, 1924).

Even the "Herald" has been compelled on occasion to see the weakness of its own party's position when some particularly flagrant case has come to its notice. Thus in an Editorial of April 12th, 1924, we find the following:—

"We do not believe that there is any fundamental distinction so long as the wage system exists, between the relationship of a private employer to his workers and the relationship of a municipality or State to its workers. In each case the latter sell their labour-power, and their capacity to sell it at a fair price depends on their capacity, through their trade unions to refuse to work."

This brings us to the second argument in favour of Nationalisation, i.e., that it improved the position of the worker within capitalism. The "Herald," in April, 1924, thinks that it makes but little difference, and we are all familiar with the poverty and discontent among postal employees, who complain, moreover, that the Labour Government has been not better, but worse, in respect of the restrictions imposed upon Civil Servants in their political activities. There is no evidence that State employees in Germany or under Australian Labour Governments have been better off than workers in private employ doing similar work. And if, as the "Daily Herald" points out, "the price of Nationalisation were the giving up of the weapon of self-protection" (the strike), then "under capitalism a nationalised industry would actually be worse off than those left in private hands" (September 13th, 1922). Lest it be thought that there is no possibility of this right being denied, it is as well to remember that the Court of Enquiry set up by the Labour Government after the London Traffic Strike ("Daily Herald," April 12th, 1924) recommended that there should be compulsory arbitration, which, as the Editor said, meant in practice the taking away of the right to strike. This report was signed by the Labour representative, Mr. Pugh.

There still remains the argument that Nationalisation is economically desirable because it paves the way for Socialism. If it is merely size that counts, then this argument obviously fails, because the trust has

## FIVE PENNY PAMPHLETS.

### A REVIEW.

Of these, one, "*The Condition of the English Working Classes*," contains some really useful information for the Socialist. The conclusion drawn from the full particulars of money-wages, prices, and unemployment since 1900 is that there has been "from 1900 onwards, a steady lowering of the standard of life to the working classes." An attempt is also made to estimate the effect produced by the payment of unemployment benefit.

The others, while carefully prepared, were intended chiefly for the defence of the Labour Government at the Election, and are a typical product of the disgruntled Liberal now so common in the Labour Party, the kind of people once happily described by the "Morning Post" as "Bourgeois turned sour."

The "*British Bondholders*," after pointing out that the bondholders "are not the working class," asks the workers to support the Russian Treaty, which is to force payment of interest to bondholders on old loans, and arrange a new loan on which more interest will be paid to bondholders.

"*Why a Treaty with Soviet Russia?*" instead of explaining why some capitalist interests support and others oppose the Russian Treaty, is based on the simple and misleading statement that "The capitalists hate Soviet Russia." It contains a summary of the relations between the British and Russian Governments since 1905.

"*Facts about the Combines*" and "*Who Keeps Prices High?*" contain figures about the profits, and facts about the organisation, of several big trusts. They both argue in the style of the old Liberals, that capitalism would be all right if it were not for the wicked trusts which keep prices high. "Under these trusts in the last twenty-four years the condition of the working classes has become worse and worse; if the condition of the workers is to improve it will only be after they have broken the power of the capitalists who control these trusts." One might suppose that before trusts were heard of, back in the middle of the nineteenth century, the working class (Who are these working classes?) were doing very well, instead of being actually in the same position as they are now.

These are obtainable from the Labour Research Department, 162, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. H.

solved the problem of large-scale organisation, and in many industries the international combine has been organised across State boundaries and over a larger field than any single Government can possibly cover. Cotton and oil are instances of this. Further, from the point of view of the future, State enterprises are economically bad, because they often introduce political considerations which are less likely in the trust. As pointed out above, Bismarck, when he took over and extended Prussian railways, was influenced largely by purely military needs and not only by the question of providing an efficient means for the transport of goods. In short, the technical and organisational basis of Socialism has long been prepared, and there is no need for half-way houses. The problem before us is solely one of propagating Socialism, no less in States like Queensland, with its ten years of Labour Government, and countries with a relatively high proportion of nationalised industries, than in countries where competitive capitalism is still strong. The private property of the capitalists, which is what we desire to take for society, cannot be touched until the workers as a whole will back up such a step. Advocating Nationalisation within the capitalist system is unnecessary, because the pressure of their own problems will force the capitalists to do this in suitable industries, and its advocacy is injurious to workers because it obscures the real aim and delays its realisation.

H.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

Thompson (Hull). The evidence for our statement of the decline of Communist membership is contained in the organ of the Communist International—"The International Press Correspondence" (August 12th, 1924). The report of C.P. of G.B. membership is given as 5,116 at date of 4th International Congress, and 3,000 at date of 5th Congress (1924).

John Jacob (Alberta), F. Goulding (Manor Park), F. L. Remington (Leicester), G. F. Foster (North London)—replies will appear next issue.

### GLASGOW.

Readers are requested to note that a new Branch has been formed. The Secretary is—

J. HIGGINS,

816, Ruthlerglen Road,  
Oatlands, Glasgow.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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NOV.,



1924

**THE GREAT SHAM FIGHT AT THE POLLS.**

The Election came too suddenly for us to be able to deal with it before the event—which saved us at least from the temptation to offer you the name and score of the winning team. Our attitude will be well known to our readers. We have but one policy, the same as at between elections. We want Socialism, and we say now, as always, that whatever the workers may get by supporting either of the three great parties, they will not get Socialism.

Workers who are so hypnotised by the promise of reforms, those patches on a rotten social structure, that they neglect to observe the rottenness of the capitalist system itself, will naturally support that party whose programme promises them most, providing that they retain enough infantile trustfulness to believe anything from the mouth of a politician. Thus the bulk of the working class voted Conservative or Liberal, and the remainder of those who voted at all gave their votes to the Labour Party. Suicidal though this is, and regrettable from the Socialist standpoint, there is no doubt that the workers who voted thus believed they were acting intelligently. Conservative policy, dictated though it is primarily in the interests of the Conservative wing of the capitalist class, may incidentally bring temporary and apparent benefit to the workers employed in certain industries.

Similarly, the policy of what was the Liberal Party, and the policy of the inheritors of the Liberal tradition, the Labour Party, might bring some seeming advantage to some other sections of the workers. In a moment of panic or under the pressure of discontent any one of these parties, all of them now claiming to be "Reform" parties, might introduce measures bringing fleeting relief to the great mass of the working class, and the latter, accustomed to taking short views, vote for the reforms and forget to ask themselves why it is that this constant reform legislation is necessary, and why, in spite of it, the condition of their class grows steadily worse. We do not defend capitalism like the Liberals and Conservatives, but neither do we defend it apologetically like the Labour Party. Mr. Wheatley, in introducing his Housing Bill, said that it was an attempt to patch up the capitalist system, in the interests of humanity. We do not believe that humanity can be served by patching up the capitalist system, but only by destroying it. If we thought otherwise we would presumably support one or other of the parties which has confidence in its ability to patch up capitalism; but we should cease to be Socialists if we shared Mr. Wheatley's belief. He ignores the fact that every reform of this kind increases the responsibility and power of the capitalist State, and increases the stability of the capitalist system.

When the workers want Socialism they will not be deceived into believing that support of the non-socialist programmes of the Liberal, Conservative, and Labour Parties will give them it.

The Election, in spite of its heat, was a sham fight, not in the sense that any of the party machines was worked at less than full pressure, but in the sense that there was no issue in dispute worth fighting about. The Conservatives said it was a fight against Socialism, but they left Socialism alone and concentrated their energies on mud-slinging and appeals to the most brutal and ignorant prejudices. The Liberals had no time to spare from their task of preventing a stampede among their own sheep. They raised the dear-bread cry to hedge the right wing off from the Conservatives, and the Bolshevik bogey to hold in the Liberal left wing. The result was heavy losses in both directions. The Labour Party was only too willing to take up every trivial challenge its

opponents chose to throw down, and avoid not only the question of Socialism, but also what it says are its own principles. Only one still small voice was heard to mention the Capital Levy, Nationalisation had to take a subordinate place to the Russian Treaty, nothing was mentioned this time about independence for Ireland or the native races in the Empire, and it was rare indeed to see an election address or hear a speech containing any definite attack on the fundamentals of the capitalist system. Socialism itself, even if the word may have crept in now and again to satisfy the left-wingers, was not treated as practical politics.

How often are we told by "Socialists" who join the Labour Party of the magnificent opportunities they will have of carrying on Socialist propaganda. Usually their "Socialist propaganda" consists in helping some place-hunter into the House of Commons by defending a sickening mixture of the platitudes of degenerate Christianity and the exploded nostrums of the trashy Liberal economists of the late nineteenth century, which is all the typical Labour election address contains.

As for the result, the Labour Party, while they may reasonably regret the shocking blunder Macdonald made in going to the country on an issue so difficult to explain in the bustle of an election as the Russian Treaty, they nevertheless feel pleased with the number of votes cast for their candidates. To have increased their poll by over a million was, in the circumstances, a so-called "victory" for them.

Mr. H. N. Brailsford, in the "New Leader" (October 31st), has something to say about Macdonald's blunder and his leadership of the Labour Party which suggests that there may be considerable discontent behind the scenes:—

*"We have undoubtedly paid heavily for the unlucky handling of the Campbell affair and the Zinovieff letter. We contrived to give the impression of a lack of candour. Our explanations came tardily, and when they came, they failed to remove the suspicion that something discreditable was being concealed. As we look back on these crowded weeks, the doubt increases whether we did wisely to refuse an inquiry into the Campbell affair. There was no truth whatever in the suspicion which our opponents fostered, that 'extremists' were dominating the Government. The plain fact is that it*

*would be difficult to name a single Member in our Party who would have approved a prosecution in the Campbell case. The Party was equally solid in its support of the Russian Treaty, and all of us would have regarded the failure to complete it as a disaster. When the heat and weariness of this struggle have passed we shall have to review at leisure the record of these nine months, but our tests will not be those which our opponents use. The shortcomings which have injured us were, to our thinking, rather temperamental than intellectual. In ability and in devoted work our Front Bench did not fall short. Its leadership, however, too often lacked frankness in the House. It was too ready to treat proper questions as insults. It thought too often in terms of conspiracies and plots, and gave undue weight to electioneering tactics. It somehow failed, when the contest came, under the stress of excitement and overwork, to raise the issue to the level of reasoned debate."*

The huge Conservative majority may well prove an embarrassing asset unless chance is very kind to them. They have first to fight out among their own sectional interests what their fiscal policy is to be, and, as recent experience should have taught them, unless unemployment decreases considerably a majority in the House is not for long a guarantee of support in the constituencies. For reasons beyond the control of the Government, unemployment may of course take a downward trend, but the Conservatives have no positive remedy, any more than has the Labour Party.

The Communists made themselves ridiculous, as usual. Whether the Zinovieff letter is forged or not, it accurately reproduces the ideas of these grown-up children who play at soldiers and gunpowder plots; Communist support of the Labour Party cost it many thousands of votes. This is how the Communists carry out their anti-Socialist policy of helping Labour into power. Is it possible to find anywhere else men so pitifully ignorant of the power of the State and of the ingenuity of the ruling class who control it; or so childishly innocent of the elements of political action? Such people would, if they had any influence on the workers, be a positive danger to any who followed them in their suicidal appeal to violence. Communists at Deptford were delirious with joy because Bowerman, supporter of a Bill to make Communist propa-



ganda illegal, was returned again. If they received orders from Moscow to do so, they would hang themselves.

Conservative victories, Liberal victories, and Labour "triumphs" we have had before. The capitalist system continues to crush the working class, and will do so until the workers realise the fraud of these parties and their programmes. Only when the workers become Socialists will the great sham fights at the polls give place to a real political struggle between capital and the working class.

## SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

### A REPLY TO A VICAR'S ATTACK UPON OUR PAMPHLET.

The Vicar of Watford (Herts) recently took it into his head to attack Socialism, taking as his text our pamphlet "Socialism and Religion." A member of our Watford Branch sent a reply to the Vicar for insertion in the "West Herts Post" (the paper reporting the Vicar's address), but this paper could not find space for it.

The local Labour Party were highly indignant at the attitude taken up by the Vicar, and spared no pains in the endeavour to prove that "Socialism" and "Christianity" were practically synonymous terms. They imported an East End parson to defend them against the imputation of supporting anti-Christian doctrines, and even threatened to secure the aid of the Bishop of St. Albans.

As the matter may perhaps be of general interest we print below the letter rejected by the "West Herts Post."—Editorial Committee, S.S.

Under the above title the "West Herts Post" for September 25th reports an address delivered at the Watford Parish Church by the Rev. Henry Edwards, the Vicar of Watford.

In this address a pamphlet entitled "Socialism and Religion," published by the Socialist Party of Great Britain (of which I am a member), was attacked by the Vicar, and is the immediate reason for the following criticism of his address.

In his address the Vicar claims that:

Religion is the true remedy for the ills of humanity;  
The Church is just as keen as Socialism to see a better state of things;  
The working men of to-day owe to Christianity their freedom, homes, education and hospitals;  
Socialism is essentially immoral and advocates free-love.

The word "Religion," as used by the Vicar, is rather confusing. The religions of the world are countless, and each sect claims that it alone holds the true philosophy of life. I take it, however, that the Vicar

is not speaking on behalf of Mohammedanism, Buddhism, or Shintoism, for instance, but only on behalf of the Christian Church. I will therefore confine my remarks to the attitude and activities of this Church.

### CHRISTIANITY AND THE WORKERS.

The Church has enjoyed for centuries a power over the affairs of men unparalleled by any other single organisation. During part of the time it was the largest landowner in the world, owning one-third of the entire land of Europe and controlling the bulk of the educational facilities. This period is familiarly known as the "Dark Ages," when persecution was rife, knowledge languished and almost died, and the poor suffered from oppressive and barbarous regulations. The Church taught but little beyond the singing of hymns, the saying of prayers, and the belief in miracles. Every step made by science then, and since, has been in spite of, and in face of, the bitter opposition of the Church. Galileo was persecuted by the Church for his scientific discoveries, and only saved himself from torture and death by recanting. Giordano Bruno was burnt for teaching that the earth goes round the sun.

From the time it became a State religion until the present day Christianity has supported the oppressors against the oppressed. The barbarities of the pagan empires were outdone by the barbarities perpetrated after Christianity became the ruling religion in the Roman Empire. The subsequent history contains records of vice on the part of the clergy that would be difficult to equal, as anyone can verify by looking into "The Life and Times of Machiavelli," by Villari, or, better still, the book the Vicar recommends us to read, "The History of European Morals," by Lecky. Lecky's book contains multitudes of illustrations of murder, rape, and other crimes committed by the leading figures in the Church. For instance, on page 261 of Vol. II he points out that Constantine, shortly after his conversion to Christianity, put to a violent death his son, his nephew, and his wife.

The doctrines taught by Christianity are slavish and calculated to make the slave satisfied with his oppressed condition. On this point let me quote Lecky again:—

"Slavery was distinctly and formally recognised by Christianity, and no religion ever laboured more to encourage a habit of docility and passive obedience." (Page 66, Vol. II.)

"Christianity for the first time gave the servile virtues the foremost place in the moral type." (Page 68, Vol. II.)

Are not "docility" and "passive obedience" the ideas most opposed to working class improvement? As long as slaves are satisfied with their lot they will submit to wage reductions and all the other oppressive conditions imposed by their masters. Acting on these ideas, the workers would not have gained the limited advantages they now possess, such as Trade Union combination, factory regulations, "limitations" of the hours of labour, and the suffrage. All these, as a matter of fact, have been obtained against the opposition of the Church.

Christianity is, therefore, proved by its own supporters (Lecky was a Protestant) to be a religion favouring the continuance of slavery.

The Church of England itself has little of which to boast. It was the offspring of the Reformation movement. The Roman Catholic religion, with its numerous holidays, feastings, and taxations for religious purposes, stood in the way of the free exploitation of the workers by the rising commercial magnates of the time. After the Reformation the holidays and feast days were abolished, the workers were driven off the green fields into the factory hells, and their fearful sufferings there—under the control of Christian employers, backed up by Christian clergy—have been recorded on many a burning page in books written by Christian and non-Christian writers. The reports of factory inspectors, Shaftesbury's "Diary," Gaskell's "Machine and Industry," Gibbin's "Industrial History of England," and a host of other books provide illustrations of the depth of brutality Bright, Cobden, and other Christian employers of the time, sank to in their lust after profit.

Martin Luther, the leading figure in the Reformation movement, hated the peasants, the poor people of his time, and supported the savage repression exercised by the feudal lords of Germany. He is reported to have written the following exhortation:—

"Crush them, strangle them, and pierce them, in secret and in the sight of men, he who can even as one would strike dead a mad dog." (Encyclopædia Britannica, 9th Ed. article Luther.)

That his suggestion was faithfully carried out appears probable, as the "Harmsworth Encyclopædia" states that 130,000 peasants were slaughtered during, and immediately after, the revolt (page 4623, Vol. VI).

### RELIGION AND SLAVERY.

The Vicar quotes Wilberforce as an example of the Church's work for freedom, but what was Wilberforce's attitude towards the oppressed?

In the period following the Battle of Waterloo, when industry was changing over from hand work to machine work, children from six years of age and upwards were employed for long hours in factories, and girls and boys were working up to sixteen hours a day in coal mines. Wilberforce was deaf to all appeals for assistance on their behalf, and used his influence to support the Government in savage acts of repression against the overworked and starving workers. In 1818, when a peaceful meeting of working men assembled at Peterloo to protest against oppressive regulations, a body of militia set upon them and massacred numbers. Wilberforce opposed any enquiry into the matter, and, in the same year, voted £1,000,000 to build new churches! (See "John o' London's Weekly," September 6th, 1924, and also the "Diary" of Lord Shaftesbury.)

Lord Shaftesbury struggled for years to interest influential people in the terrible plight of factory children, but he failed to enlist the Church in the support of factory legislation. Those who shed tears over the condition of the black slaves in far-away America were blind to the anguish of the tiny white slaves at their door. Here is a brief extract from Hodder's "Life of Lord Shaftesbury," which will give a faint idea of the horrors prevailing at the time in the coal mines of this Christian country:—

"A very large proportion of the workers underground were less than thirteen years of age; some of them began to toil in the pits when only four or five; many when between six and seven, and the majority when not over eight or nine—females as well as males. . . .

"From the time the first coal was brought forward in the morning, until the last whirley had passed at night, that is to say for twelve or fourteen hours a day, the trapper was at his monotonous, deadening work. . . . Except on Sunday, they never saw the sun. . . .

"It sometimes happened that the children employed in the mines were required to work 'double shifts,' that is to say, thirty-six hours continuously, and the work thus cruelly protracted consisted, not in tending self-acting machinery, but in the heaviest kinds of bodily fatigue, such as pushing loaded waggons." (Pages 221-222.)

Shaftesbury complains bitterly of the indifference of the clergy to the children's sufferings. In his diary he makes the following remarks on the clergy:—



"I find as usual, the clergy are, in many cases, frigid; in some few, hostile. So it has ever been with me. At first I could get none; at last I have obtained a few, but how miserable a proportion of the entire class! The ecclesiastics, as a mass, are, perhaps, as good as they can be under any institution of things where human nature can have full swing; but they are timid, time-serving, and great worshippers of wealth and power. I can scarcely remember an instance in which a clergyman has been found to maintain the cause of labourers in the face of pew-holders." (Hodder's "Life," page 378.)

I may add that Wilberforce and other Church dignitaries who were so concerned about negro slavery raised not a murmur about the indentured white labour, which was equally as bad, if not worse, that flourished in America at the same time.

#### RELIGION AND PATRIOTISM.

The Vicar urges patriotism, and blames Socialism for being unpatriotic. We had a good illustration of the patriotism of Christianity during the war. The Christian Churches of Germany blessed the arms of the German soldiers and wished the soldiers success in their endeavour to murder their fellow-beings of other lands. The Christian Churches of England likewise blessed the English soldier and prayed that he would be successful in the slaughter. Incidentally, I may mention that the English Church had thousands of pounds invested in War Loan! The patriotism of the Church has been dealt with by Lecky as follows:—

"Much misapplied learning has been employed in endeavouring to extract from the Fathers a consistent doctrine concerning the relations of subjects to their sovereigns; but every impartial observer may discover that the principle on which they acted was exceedingly simple. When a sovereign was sufficiently orthodox in his opinions, and sufficiently zealous in patronising the Church and persecuting the heretics, he was extolled as an angel. When his policy was opposed to the Church he was represented as a demon." (History of European Morals, page 261, Vol. II.)

The financial interests of the Church are bound up with the continuance of the present system of profitmaking. It has millions of pounds invested in railway and other securities, from which it draws dividends, so that it stands to workers in the relation of an employer to the employed. As such, therefore, it is in favour of wage slavery and against its abolition.

#### RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

And now a few words on Education. Christianity has been the prevailing religion among Western nations for two thousand years, and yet educational facilities

were not provided for the mass of the people until comparatively recently. Every step in education has been opposed by the Church. It was "infidels" like Robert Owen and William Lovett who pressed forward the movement for elementary education, and the Church flung the same charge—"immorality"—against Owen that it has flung against every innovator. When National School Boards were established, the Church saw that its resistance was futile, so the clergy fought for control of the School Boards in order that religious teaching should occupy the main part of the curriculum.

Pestalozzi, who has been called the "Founder of the Elementary School," met with opposition and indifference in his attempt to spread education among the poor. His biographer, Gabriel Compayre, writes:

"In every time and country, fanatics have been found to decry innovators. He was accused of countenancing anti-Christian doctrines. . . . Those of his colleagues who had remained orthodox Protestants were the first to cast stones at him." (Pestalozzi and Elementary Education, page 57.)

#### RELIGION AND FAMILY LIFE.

The Vicar contends that the coming of Socialism will bring immorality and destroy family life. There is no need to look into the future, the evil is here in our midst to-day, and the source of the evils is the system in which we live. The introduction of the factory system long ago dragged the father, mother, and children from the home and set them in competition with each other in industry.

The streets of every large town in this country are thronged with women who are compelled to barter their bodies in exchange for bread. They must live, and the avenues of employment are already thronged to overflow with the unsuccessful. When women are assured of their bread they will be able to spend their affections freely upon those they love, and some of them will not have to adopt the sordid refuge of the streets. But it is not only on the streets that bodies are bought. The woman that enters into a loveless marriage, in order to obtain security of livelihood, is just as much a prostitute as her sister of the streets, the only difference of account being that one sells herself for a short while and the other does so for life. The boasted morality of to-day is a sham, as the ugly facts published in the divorce columns of the daily papers bear eloquent witness.

How much home life does the average worker get? In many instances the whole family are out at work all day trying to obtain the wherewithal to keep a roof over their heads. Their home is more of a sleeping and meal-snatching place than anything else. Overwork makes them irritable with each other, and the time they have together is too brief to enable them to thoroughly understand one another. Trying to make the meagre wages cover the needs of the family, crabs and twists the minds of all. Finally, it is surely idle to speak of home life to working people nowadays, when multitudes of them cannot even find, or pay the rent of, houses to live in, and have to pack themselves into rooms under unhealthy conditions and with the fear of eviction from even these poor shelters constantly haunting them.

#### RELIGION AND SUBMISSION.

That the virtues extolled by Christianity are the virtues of submission is borne out by the statements of the Founder Himself. In his celebrated "Sermon on the Mount" Christ says:—

"Blessed are the poor in spirit. . . ."

"Blessed are the meek. . . ."

"Blessed are they that mourn. . . ."

"Blessed are the peacemakers. . . ."

The following out of these ideals is a passive submission to the misery and oppression of this world for the sake of the happiness to be enjoyed in a mythical world hereafter. The true Christian is exhorted to "Resist not evil," and, therefore, must not take any action to alter the existing order of society, in which the workers are a class of poor and oppressed slaves, subject to the laws and whims of a profit-seeking class of employers.

Socialism aims at taking from the masters the power they wield and the wealth they have stolen. Its object is to raise the workers from slaves to freemen. It is therefore opposed to Christianity.

I have now shown, by a few illustrations out of the multitudes that exist, that the ideals and attitude of the Church were, and are, opposed to the interests of the workers. Any real advance the workers make will have to be made, now as in the past, against the opposition of the Church. If the workers would cast off the chains of wage slavery, then they must cast off the slavish doctrines of Christianity, which counsel them to love, honour, and obey those who oppress them.

G. McCLATCHIE.

## LABOUR AND VALUE.

### HAROLD COX ON KARL MARX.

A correspondent (Francis H. Napier) takes exception to Mr. Harold Cox's criticisms of the Labour Theory of Value expounded by Marx. He quotes from a series of "Daily Mail" articles by Mr. Cox as follows:—

"... many socialists . . . even when admitting that the greater part of modern wealth is created by the machine and not by the men—will try to wriggle out of the consequences of that fact by arguing that the machine itself is the product of labour, and therefore anything that it produces ought to belong to labour. This very common Socialist contention ignores the fact that the work-people who produced the machine were all paid for the work they did. Some of them may have been underpaid; some may have been overpaid; but they all received payment. They are not entitled subsequently to claim that the machine is theirs."

Mr. Napier correctly points out that in admitting that the machine was produced by labour, Harold Cox is also admitting the accuracy of the statement that wealth is produced by labour; but both Mr. Napier and Harold Cox misrepresent Marx in suggesting that he made this the basis of a moral claim for the labourer of the full value produced. Mr. Cox, of course, is very well aware that Marx made no such claim. We cannot deal with that point here, but with regard to the question of payment for work done it must be quite apparent that if the workers did receive the full value of the machines produced by them, then the machines, or their equivalent, would belong to the workers after the work was finished, and there would be no surplus to go as profits to the employer. That profit represents the difference between the value of the product and the value of the workers' labour-power. The workers do receive the value of their labour-power, their wages, but they do not receive the full value of their product.

Mr. Napier goes on to ask if it is correct, as Harold Cox says, that Socialists argue that "value . . . merely depends upon the amount of labour." He states that he was not aware that Socialists held this view, "but rather that the value of the commodity was determined by its cost of production."

Mr. Napier has fallen into an error here through a confusion as to the meaning of terms. When Marx speaks of "cost of production" he means its cost in labour, not the cost to the manufacturer of materials, wages, etc.

Marx deals plainly and simply with this



subject in "Value, Price, and Profit" (chapter 6). He writes as follows: "The relative values of commodities are, therefore, determined by the respective quantities or amounts of labour, worked up, realised, fixed in them"; and again, "The greatness of its value . . . depends . . . on the relative mass of labour necessary for its production."

Mr. Napier quotes further from Harold Cox a question as to whether labour spent in pulling down a house is creating value, and answers it himself by showing that if a certain plot of land is required for the building of a new house or factory, then the work of demolition is a necessary part of the new building scheme, and the labour is therefore, in the words of Marx, "socially necessary" and value creating.

He quotes also illustrations of what Harold Cox calls "wasted or non-productive labour." Two fishing boats set out to sea, and only one of them succeeds in getting a catch. Two watchmakers make a watch, but only one of them will go. Have the unlucky boatman and the bad watchmaker created value? asks Mr. Cox.

The answer is that a certain proportion of unlucky voyages is inevitable, and this wasted labour is therefore a necessary feature of the security of the amount of fish required by society. The socially necessary labour cost of obtaining fish includes this proportion of wasted labour. Marx, as Harold Cox knows, never claimed that value "merely depends upon the amount of labour," but on the amount which at a given time it is necessary for society to expend. If labour is wasted unnecessarily, then it is not value creating. This is the position of the watchmaker who knows so little of his trade as to make a watch which will not go.

While we are on the subject of Harold Cox, it is interesting to learn that he has only just found out that MacDonald is an anti-Marxist. After quoting from MacDonald's writings to show that the latter has long ago repudiated Marxism, he continues:—

"To repudiate Marx is to repudiate Socialism as well as Communism. Ramsay MacDonald may claim to have a peculiar brand of Socialism of his own manufacture, but he is not entitled to act as interpreter for other socialists when he repudiates the prophet who founded their creed." (Saturday Review, 25th Oct.)

It is noticeable, however, that the Harold Cox of the "Saturday Review" does not

agree with the Harold Cox of the "Daily Mail," to whom MacDonald is not merely the proprietor of a "peculiar brand of Socialism of his own manufacture," but a representative Socialist. H.

### A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

Though slavery, as we have pointed out, was a necessary step in the development of human society, it by no means follows that it is necessary to society for all time. Slavery, or any other feature of society which may be necessary under certain historical conditions, may, and often does, become unnecessary when those conditions have passed away. This, to some extent, will explain the changes in the forms of slavery that have appeared throughout the history of class society. The chattel slavery of ancient Greece and Rome, when it no longer conformed to the requirements of society as determined in the main by economic development, was superseded by the serfdom of the middle ages, and this in turn was superseded by the wage slavery of present-day society.

So sure as slavery has its origin in the limited powers of wealth production of earlier times, and served to free a section of society to devote their time to the common business of society, which includes "the organisation of labour, the business of government, the administration of justice, art, science, etc.," it can be said to be necessary for human development. But when the means and methods of wealth production reach the stage of development of to-day, class society, with its slavery, ceases to be necessary to social advancement. In fact, it becomes a hindrance to social development. But this brings us to the question of what is useful or necessary in class society. No ruling class gives up its power of domination over the rest of society by virtue of the effects of their domination upon society, nor even for the purpose of social development. The question of whether a particular ruling class, or any of those social institutions which serve its purpose, is useful or necessary, has to be viewed relatively. What a ruling class may consider as useful or necessary may be, and generally is in the ultimate, considered by the rest of society as being useless and unnecessary. This is be-

cause the different material interests of the classes inevitably give rise to different ideas of social institutions. A ruling class will cling on to its power like grim death, and will either believe, or pretend to believe, that all that is associated with its domination is for the good of humanity as a whole. On the other hand, the rest of society must sooner or later feel the effects of domination, which involves their exploitation, and thus regard things from a different standpoint. The whole question becomes one of a contest for supremacy, which culminates in a social revolution. The statement of Marx that force is the midwife of the old society which is pregnant with the new can be regarded as a historical axiom which tells us much more than at first meets the eye. It implies that, though political force is employed in the formation of a new form of society, it can only be used for that purpose when any given form of society has reached a certain stage of economic development, when it "becomes pregnant with the new." And this is a fact which has been impressed upon the minds of many who have taken part in movements for the establishment of a new form of society before the conditions were ripe. Further, this statement of Marx regarding class society implies that revolution is a necessary part of the whole process of evolution, and is a standing challenge to those who deny the necessity of revolution as a means of changing the form of society. A society does not change from one form to another automatically, nor do we discover any evidence of an existing ruling class forming a new form of society. As the economic development proceeds apace, ever bringing in its train fresh conditions, the more does any ruling class mould, or endeavour to mould, its domination in harmony with those conditions. The form of society is kept intact, even though concessions are made to the rest of society. The economic changes, with the changes in laws that are made from time to time by a ruling class, come within the process of evolution. But the revolution, the change in the entire form of society, must necessarily be carried out through a conflict between the classes—the dominant class using its power to retain its hold upon society, and the class seeking power endeavouring to get it by getting control of the State machinery held by the ruling class. The control of the State leads to the control of society. For it must be understood that

the State, although signifying to the popular mind the whole of the people, is in reality an organ of class rule.

In the early stages of class society it became necessary to have an institution to deal with the conflicts arising from the exploitation of one class by another. As wealth accumulated on the one side and misery and wretchedness on the other, the more was society disturbed by internal conflicts. Not only this, but the wealth of individuals in that society became the cause of a systematic plundering by outside sources. Consequently, there arose the necessity for the formation of an institution which would not only protect the privately owned wealth, but would also endow that wealth "with the universal sanction of society." "And this institution was found," says Engels. "The State arose." Arising from the necessity of conserving the wealth of individuals forming a class by themselves, and the desire of these to keep in check the rest of society, the State, differing in form from that of earlier times, has retained its essential character throughout, that is, a means of domination.

As Engels points out:—

"The antique state was, therefore, the state of the slave-owners for the purpose of holding the slaves in check. The feudal state was the organ of the nobility for the suppression of the serfs and dependent farmers. The modern representative state is the tool of the capitalist exploiters of wage labour."—"Origin of the family," page 209).

Now, as most people are aware, the State not only consists of the machinery for making laws, it also consists of the means of enforcing the observance of those laws. Obviously, there would be little use of making laws in a society where class divisions prompt people to act in defiance of them, unless some means existed to enforce action in line with the laws. The means existing for this purpose, although covered by a "code of legality," are the armed forces.

R. REYNOLDS.

○ (To be continued.)

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION."

The Socialist Educational Society of New York have, by permission of the S.P.G.B., reprinted the above pamphlet. The S.P.G.B. are the sole agents for the pamphlet in this country, and copies can be obtained from Head Office at 5d. each, postage 1d. extra. Special terms for quantities.



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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.

## VIOLENCE AND THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

It is customary for our opponents to represent the Social Revolution as an orgy of bloodshed. They profess to believe that violence, in various forms, is its essential feature. Thus Mr. Arthur Henderson, Secretary of the Labour Party, in an article in the "Daily Herald" (November 19th), refers to "the odour of blood and hatred, etc. which clings to the idea of the Social Revolution." He wishes this "odour" to be dissociated from the programme of "fundamental economic transformation" proposed by the Labour Party, and expresses the opinion that the Party has suffered from some of its adherents talking about the "iniquities of the capitalist class," and "the class war."

Before proceeding to examine this conception more closely, it is worth noting that the above Mr. Arthur Henderson was for some considerable period a member of a Government which, among others, was officially responsible for the slaughter of millions of members of the working class. Apparently Mr. Henderson's aversion to blood and hatred does not prevent him from helping to carry on a war in the interests of the ruling class.

The same remark applies to numerous other members of the present-day "party of peace."

Another point which calls for comment is the fact that none of the proposals of the Labour Party which have found practical legislative shape involve any "fundamental economic transformation." On the contrary, every one of these proposals has

always recognised the legality of the ownership by its present proprietors of the mass of wealth which we refer to as the means of living, that is the land, railways, factories, etc.

An economic transformation could only be fundamental if this legal right of the owner-class was abolished, through the conversion of the means of life into the common property of the whole community. The dispossession of the master-class by the wage-slave class, that is alone a fundamental change since it upsets the very basis of the existing social order; and that is precisely the essential feature of the social revolution. Any violence there may be will be entirely incidental, and will obviously depend upon the nature of the resistance offered by the master-class to the abolition of their privileges. So long as the master-class control the political machinery and along with it the major force in society it is clear that a revolutionary organisation is not in a position to use force with any chance of success, and consequently has no interest in doing so. On the other hand, once the revolutionary party has conquered political power the force it will exercise to carry out its object will then be "constitutional," i.e., the act of established authority.

The Labour Party along with their Communist supporters encourage the idea that revolution and political activity along peaceful and legal lines are in some way opposed to one another. The Socialist Party denies such opposition. With the social revolu-



tion as its avowed object it proclaims the necessity of the workers becoming organised consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government (see Declaration of Principles) as the means of accomplishing that object. Its activity consists in endeavouring to convince the workers of the need for Socialism, which consequently brings it into conflict with all parties which seek to persuade them that some other object is worthy of their support.

In conducting this activity we are guided by the fact that the interests of the workers and of their masters are opposed to one another. The established order is responsible for poverty; it is therefore to the interests of the workers to abolish it.

At the same time the present basis of society provides the few with wealth. We need not be astonished then that they defend it. This elementary fact is continually being obscured by reformers of every description.

They profess to be able to harmonise class interests and see no harm in exchanging political support with the parties of the masters. Thus the Labour Party held office by consent of a majority of Liberals and Conservatives in the late Parliament. Such a position would be inconceivable in the case of a Socialist Party. Acting in the interests of the workers, it would oppose the parties of the masters at every step, and would consequently meet with their opposition in return. Such a party can only exist and develop as a result of an increasing mental grasp by the workers of their own position.

Mr. Arthur Henderson and his associates fear such a development. Hence their aversion to any discussion of the class war. The fact of such a conflict in society, evident throughout every section of economic life, must be kept apart from political issues to suit their ambitions to be successful statesmen. But economic evolution is no respecter of personal ambitions.

The class war continues and becomes more intense in spite of all efforts to hide it.

The question is not fundamentally one of morality. The Socialist Party does not talk of the iniquity of the master-class. They, like ourselves, are the creatures of social development. Consequently we do not howl

for their blood. Candidly, it is their property we want, and if they are determined to die rather than yield, die they must; but we do not imagine that social evils are due to their sins or that any altered outlook on their part will remove these evils. The system is the cause of these evils, and the system must be abolished. Instead of abolishing the system the Labour Party proposes to camouflage it by turning shareholders into Government Bondholders. They simply propose to paint Capitalism red (like a pillar-box) and call it Socialism.

The social revolution is the only logical outcome of the existing struggle between the classes. The master-class cannot exist without a slave-class and that class in its turn cannot exist except as a result of a continual conflict with its masters for its means of subsistence.

Strikes and lock-outs are not the results of mere differences of opinion. They proceed from an antagonism of interest. In order that the masters may make profit, wages must be kept as low as will allow the worker to produce that profit. Both sides realise this in practice, however little they may grasp its implications in theory; but it is not to the workers' interest that the masters should make any profit out of them. Hence their struggle over wages questions.

Wages, however, become more and more insecure; unemployment increases and wages fall. What outlook, then, has the wage-slave? No hope, certainly, under capitalism.

Emancipation from want can only come with the abolition of class-ownership of the means of life, i.e., in the social revolution.

The common ownership of the means of life, with production carried on in a socially-organised manner for the provision of food, clothing and shelter for all, that is Socialism, the object of the Socialist Party, the party of the Social Revolution.

E. B.

### "SOCIALISM AND RELIGION."

The Socialist Educational Society of New York have, by permission of the S.P.G.B., reprinted the above pamphlet. The S.P.G.B. are the sole agents for the pamphlet in this country, and copies can be obtained from Head Office at 5d. each, postage 1d. extra. Special terms for quantities.

## THE DOUGLAS CREDIT SCHEME EXPOSED.

A REVIEW OF DOUGLAS AND ORAGE'S  
"CREDIT, POWER AND DEMOCRACY,"

From the days of Marx and Engels, Socialists have pointed out that the improvements in the instruments of production added to the continual increase in the applications of science and discoveries to industry, were resulting in the means of production out-running the effective demand for and consumption of products. The periodical crises of the nineteenth century that resulted from these facts brought forward various "remedies," many of a financial character. One of the best known of these was "Bimetallism," or the double standard, which we were told would ensure "stability," in spite of the fact that countries that had adopted the scheme were just as unstable, if not more so, than those with a single standard. But the great favourite idea was the one of supplying "cheap" credit to the small producer or capitalist who was being beaten in competition by the large capitalist. As this "credit" could not—for obvious reasons—be obtained through the usual financial channels, the municipality or the State was called upon to supply it.

The Great War brought about an immense acceleration in the improvements of instruments of production and the applications of science to industry, and a great increase in combinations among capitalists reaching in many cases to the Trust stage. While the huge destruction of products by the war continued accompanied by the withdrawal of millions of men from industry, these means of production were kept occupied. When the war ended a two-fold increase in the old problem faced the master class. First, the great demand for products for war having ended, large numbers of workers were thrown out of employment and plants were standing idle. Second, the demobilisation of the huge armies threw another immense number of men upon the streets. At first the cry went up for "mass production" of peace commodities, a cry backed up by the Labour leaders, and war factories were converted as speedily as possible to this end. The

result was, of course, easy to foretell. After a short feverish "boom" in production of goods for which there was no effective demand, a fearful slump followed with larger numbers than ever thrown out of employment.

Of course, numerous remedies, old and new, were put forward to deal with this enormous problem, and among them our old friends the money and credit cranks turned up again. Some advocated the abolition of the gold standard. Others the inflation of the currency. And, of course, the question of "cheap" credit cropped up once more. The great point common to all these schemes was that they promised to preserve capitalism while offering enormous benefits to the workers. As the facts mentioned above show this is a contradiction in terms. While capitalism lasts the tendency is for further improvements in the means of production and extended application of science to industry. Not only so, but these improvements and applications proceed far faster than the growth in markets, with the result that the markets are filled up in a shorter time than before and unemployment spreads faster and farther as a consequence. There is no escape from this position, nor any solution of the problem while the private ownership of materials and instruments of production remains. At present the capitalist class is "staving off" the worst effects of the enormous unemployment by extending Unemployment Insurance, inaccurately termed "the dole."

The work now under consideration is one of these attempts to save capitalism from catastrophe by means of "credit" manipulation. This statement may surprise those members of the I.L.P., etc., who have been mystified by its confused exposition into supposing that its object was to provide a scheme to benefit or even to emancipate the workers. In fairness to the author it must be stated that he makes no such claim himself, for while he says capitalism is breaking down, he proposes the scheme to save society from crashing into chaos. The



workers are to remain workers and the capitalists are to continue to be capitalists.

Major Douglas takes about 150 pages to expound his scheme, and Mr. A. R. Orage of the "New Age" kindly adds another 60 pages of commentary to "explain its general meaning." There was certainly great need for this, but it is doubtful if the object has been accomplished. The author exhibits little knowledge of economics and hardly more of industry. His various and confusing uses of the word "credit" makes it difficult for the non-technical reader to follow his argument, while the student of economics is merely irritated at the misstatements and misunderstandings of capitalism shown in the exposition. Thus on page 6 we are told that the fundamental policy of a capitalistic manufacturing enterprise—

is to pay its way as a means to the end of maintaining and increasing its financial credit with the banks.

The most elementary student of economics knows that under capitalism the "fundamental policy" of a concern is to produce profits for the capitalists, and its "financial credit" is only one of the factors in that policy. The first sub-heading to chapter I is entitled "The Fallacy of Marxianism." Yet there is not one word of Marx nor a single statement of Marxianism in the whole chapter. According to pages 22 and 26 Major Douglas imagines that all increases of capitalisation consist of bankers' overdrafts, and it actually is made a part of his scheme. This absurd notion leads to the further fallacy that the banker not only decides what shall be produced, but also the prices at which the articles shall be sold (pp. 32 and 46.). "Credit" is used at one time to mean instruments of production, while later on it is defined as "the correct estimate of the capacity of a community with its plant, culture and labour, to deliver goods and services" (p. 101). Financial credit is the issue of money as overdrafts, etc. Mr. Orage explains on page 192 that "consumable goods plus capital goods and imports make up between them the sum of the real credit produced," but on page 197 he defines real credit as given on page 101. Further confusion is shown in dealing with capital. On pages 28-29, we read that "capital represents potential production of ultimate commodities," while on page 34 it is described

as "tools, factories, intermediate products." In the same paragraph it is asserted that the prices of ultimate products turned out in a limited time includes the total cost of tools, factories, etc., although the latter may continue to give service for years after. The fact is, of course, that the average life of a machine, tool or factory is taken and its cost split up among the number of articles produced during that life, and therefore the "prices of ultimate products" for any period less than this life will *not* contain the whole of the capital cost. While it is admitted on page 42 that the "individual entrepreneur" has been superseded by the limited liability company, both Major Douglas and Mr. Orage retain and repeat the superstition that the capitalist "administers" industry.

Numerous other fallacies are scattered throughout the book but we must pass them over to examine the scheme proposed.

Major Douglas avoids numerous difficulties and questions by laying it down that everything economic is "credit." Raw materials, instruments of production, and finished products are all "credit." This credit is the creation equally of consumers and producers because without the consumer the goods produced would be useless. Consumers and producers appear in their joint characters as "members of the public." The first point to be grasped clearly is that the *capacity* of our means of production is far greater than our actual production. The total capacity to produce, or "the correct estimate of ability to produce and deliver goods as and when and where required" (p. 189) is called our "real" or "national" credit. When giving an illustration, however, some further confusion is introduced by sometimes limiting "real" credit to means of production. Whatever definition may be taken, the object of the scheme is to distribute the margin between the amount of consumable goods produced and the amount of real credit, among the consumers. It is estimated that the present production of real credit is four times greater than the production of consumable goods. The scheme proposes to distribute this difference or margin by regulating the price of consumable commodities in this ratio. That is to say, that consumable goods would be sold at one-fourth the total cost of production, thus distributing to the

consumer his share of the national credit at the moment of purchase. For the purpose of illustration the coal industry is taken and the scheme worked out in some detail on that product. Coal besides being a consumable good is also used as a means of production, but, as here, it increases the "capacity to deliver goods and services out of all proportion to the 'cost' of raising it" (p. 119) the manufacturer is already in possession of his margin, or rather *more* than his margin, and he is to pay over this excess in the form of an increased price—"an agreed percentage"—above the cost of production. The question of coal for export would be decided by our need of coal and the conditions of the world market. We thus have "domestic" coal sold at a quarter its cost of production, "commercial" coal sold at "an agreed percentage" above the cost of production, and "export" coal at a price determined by the world market. It is assumed as probable that the total of above prices will *not* equal the total cost of production. Then what is to become of the poor coalmine owner? Quite simple. The margin between the total prices and the total costs of production—including interest, dividends, etc.—will be made good to the coalowner by the Government in Treasury notes issued against the National Credit. The larger the amount of National Credit the lower will be the price of domestic coal, and the lower the cost of producing coal, the lower will be the prices of goods into the production of which coal enters. This is where the coal miner is considered. As he is a consumer of numerous articles of the latter kind, it will be to his benefit to produce coal as cheaply as possible so as to lower the prices of the articles he requires. Further, as these articles will be consumable goods *their* price will be regulated by the ratio between their cost of production and real credit, as in the case of domestic coal. Hence another inducement to the miner to increase real credit, so far as coal forms a part of it by working hard and cheap.

Such is the proposal, and its application to all branches of industry producing consumable goods will, presumably, follow the same line. What would happen in the industries that only produce "intermediate products" as machines, engines, ships, railways, factories, etc. we are left to guess.

The next point is how the scheme is to be brought into operation. The object to be attained is that "the public acquire control of credit-issue and price-making." On page 86 we are told "There is no hope whatever in the hustings." Yet the second clause of the scheme, calls in the Government to enforce the scheme upon industry. And clauses 1—2 and 6 of Part 2 call in the Government to carry out important details.

A producers' bank is to be established in each industry. The Government shall recognise this bank as an integral part of the industry and representing its credit. It shall ensure its affiliation with the clearing house.

The shareholders of the bank shall be all the persons engaged in the industry, who shall have one vote each at a meeting. The bank as such shall pay no dividend.

The directors (of the industry) shall pay all wages and salaries to the producers' bank in bulk and the bank shall allocate to each employee's account his wage or salary.

Once the bank is in operation all subsequent expenditure on capital account shall be financed jointly by the colliery owners and the producers' bank in the ratio which total dividends bear to salaries and wages. The benefits of such financing done by the producers' bank shall accrue to the depositors.

The capital already invested in the mining properties and plant shall be entitled to a fixed return of, say, 6 per cent., and, together with all fresh capital, shall continue to carry with it all the ordinary privileges of capital administration other than price-fixing.

The Government shall reimburse to the colliery owners the difference between their total costs incurred and their total price received, by means of Treasury notes, such notes being debited, as now, to the National Credit Account.

In the case of a reduction in the costs of working, one-half such reduction shall be dealt with in the National Credit Account, one-quarter shall be credited to the colliery owners, and one-quarter to the producers' bank.

Other clauses deal with the questions of prices, accounts, etc., that need not detain us here.



The first point that sticks out from the scheme, like a column on a plain, is that the capitalist and capitalism are to remain. Public control of credit issue and price-making is to result merely in *the capitalist being guaranteed his dividends from the National Credit*. "But prices will be lower for all consumers," we will be told, "and therefore the workers will benefit as consumers." The remark is fallacious, for while every producer is a consumer, *every consumer is not a producer*. Those consumers who live, without producing, on profits—whether in the form of interest or dividends—will, first, have their profits guaranteed to them, and second, their purchasing power enormously increased by the fall in prices. But the worker remains a wage-slave and his wages will be determined by his cost of living, modified by the pressure he may be able to exert through his Trade Union. Mr. Orage claims that under the scheme "the exclusively proletarian Trade Union ceases to be necessary." On the contrary they will be required more than ever for an employer whose dividends are guaranteed is in a far stronger position than one who has to use his dividends in a fight with the workers.

Thus the workers will be called upon to work harder and produce more in order to cheapen consumable goods for the capitalists, while the workers' own position will be worse relatively, and even absolutely. Major Douglas says quite definitely that if the demand for the product falls off "the industry would produce the same amount of real purchasing power for distribution among its members through the agency of dividends *with less work, wages and salaries*" (page 124, italics ours). In other words the exploitation of the workers would increase under the conditions mentioned.

It may be objected to this that under the scheme every worker in the industry would be a shareholder in the bank, and could draw "dividends" on his portion of the shares the bank holds for credit advanced for capital expansion. Or, as Major Douglas puts it:

So that as improvements in process displaced men from industry the purchasing power they had helped to create would be available in the form of dividends. (P. 125.)

Under the illustration given in the book the ratio of wages and salaries to dividends

is estimated as 9 to 1; so that if £100,000 were required for an extension of the industry, £90,000 would be advanced by the producers' bank and £10,000 by the owners of the industry. But this clause is sheer farce. It may astonish the ignorant Major Douglas and his followers to know that many industries extend their business *out of revenue* without any fresh capitalisation at all. The big banks have been doing it for years. Even where capitalisation takes place later on, it is usually done to hide large profits. The owners of an industry under this scheme need not ask for a single £1 note from the producers' bank, but could carry out their extensions as "expenses of business" and the amount would be guaranteed by the Government. Even if it suited the owners' interests to call upon the producers' bank, the amount called need never be large enough to balance the owners' shares, while to argue that the few shillings—at most—that would be the share of each of the hundreds of thousands of workers in the industry, would maintain a man out of work, is absurd.

It is thus easy to see that the scheme was drawn up with the object of preserving the economic position of the small capitalist and dividend drawer from the result of what Major Douglas thinks is an impending collapse. The workers are to be deceived into fancying they are capitalists or sharing in the control of industry by a few shares collectively owned through a bank, just as many are misled by the "profit-sharing" schemes in operation in so many industries to-day. But the scheme will fail to find general acceptance because the large capitalists and financiers are not interested in it, nor even in Major Douglas' cry of "chaos coming," while the smaller capitalists do not possess the power to put it into operation.

The portion of the book written by Major Douglas is written in the bombastically ignorant and offensively arrogant style of a youth from a so-called Public School. Mr. Orage, as an older and more experienced propagandist, is far more careful as he sees the necessity of converting or hoodwinking the workers into accepting the scheme before it can be tried.

But its fallacies seem too glaring even for his hopes.

The book is priced at 7s. 6d.. The pub-

lishers should have made it £7 6s. to prevent any worker who might have made a bit of overtime one week from wasting money upon its purchase. J. FITZGERALD.

### HOW LABOUR RULED MESPOT. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SLAUGHTER.

When it became known that bomb-dropping was regularly used by the Labour Government as a means of peacefully persuading Irak Tribesmen that British capitalism had a better right in their country than they had themselves, many simple supporters of the Labour Party were shocked. They had supposed that Empires can be built on love and maintained by soft words, and they were greatly relieved when Mr. Leach explained the whole matter away.

Mr. Leach accounted for British occupancy of the territory by saying that it was a point of honour to remain and fulfill "our" pledges; and he was able to give the assurance that—

under our administration British air operations have so far caused no deaths. Thanks to the method of warning notices, submission takes place five times out of six without recourse to bombs, and has succeeded in the remaining cases through the destruction of property and cattle. —Daily Herald, July 15th, 1924.

Now Lord Thomson, Chief of the Air Ministry, of which Mr. Leach was Under-Secretary, has disclosed the real facts. It was not honour but capitalist interest in oil which kept the Labour Government in Irak, and with regard to the bomb-dropping Mr. Leach appears to have resorted to complete suppression of the facts.

The following quotation is from a lecture given by Lord Thomson at a meeting of the Central Asian Society on November 21st. ("The Times," November 22nd, 1924.)

After briefly tracing the route followed in his tour, Lord Thomson brought home to his audience the efficacy of bombing by describing the manner in which the recent Wahabi invasion of the Transjordan was crushed. The British forces consisted solely of aeroplanes sent out at the shortest possible notice, backed by armoured cars. *The effect of our air attack was appalling. Some 700 of the tribesmen were killed and the rest, seized with panic, fled into the desert, where hundreds more must have perished from thirst. Unless some such punishment as swift and terrible as this had been inflicted, the task of restoring order would have been long drawn-out, and in the end more costly in lives and money, while the results would not have been so lasting.*

Lord Thomson went on to say that it might be true that oil was the key of the Arabian riddle, though he considered that wheat-produc-

tion, for some years at least, held greater possibilities. The primary necessity, however, was security. The country could best be opened up by making the process a gradual one. By using it as a link in the chain of Imperial communications, this would be achieved.

On the question of the duration of British protection in Irak, Lord Thomson said that Britain had promised an independent Arab State, and we must honour our pledge, which could only be done by remaining in the country until it could defend itself. We could wriggle out of our obligations in various fashions, but the immediate consequence, in his opinion, would be anarchy, disorder, and confusion. Somebody would have to restore the situation, and if we did not, the Turks would. In the present state of affairs, the British Air Force in Irak was the cement which kept the bricks together. He hoped that the task we had undertaken would not be left unfinished by any form of withdrawal.

### LLOYD GEORGE TELLS THE TRUTH.

There may still remain some simple souls who think there exists an essential difference between Liberal and Tory. Be in doubt no longer friend. Lloyd George, who is getting on in years, has been moved to glorify his latter days by a burst of real truth. When one remembers what he has said about his Tory opponents, one can only conclude he wants to appear before Peter with at least one good deed on his record. Anyhow he has set your doubts at rest.

It was at Cardiff it happened, on the night of October 25th, when according to the "Daily News," he spoke as follows:

Now one word to my Tory friends. They are honestly afraid of Socialism. I will tell them how to get it. Destroy the Liberal Party first. (Cheers.)

I ask the Conservatives: Are you going to take the risk of having no alternative, no support? Are you going to destroy a party which does not agree with you, which takes a different point of view, which looks at things from a different angle, which has a different tradition, but which is just as firmly rooted as you in the existing order?"

So there you have it all in its naked simplicity. Comment is almost unnecessary. We will confine ourselves to emphasising that their difference is merely one of angle, of point of view; not fundamental at all. The Liberal Party is an "alternative," a "support." They are "just as firmly rooted . . . in the existing order" as the Tories. The Socialist Party has said so for years. Lloyd George has now publicly admitted it. Then doubt no longer. Join a party with a bedrock difference, not one with a squint. W. T. H.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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1924

**THE BANKRUPTCY  
OF "COMMUNIST" THEORY.**

Immediately after the Bolshevik seizure of power there was some excuse for the misconceptions of the significance and causes of that event, which were prevalent here in working class circles. Reliable information on Russian affairs had been lacking throughout the war years, and to those who were not familiar through historical study with the slow growth of social forces, no rumoured happening behind the wall of censorship was too fantastic to be believed. Those people outside Russia who erred in crediting the Bolsheviks with achievements which were hardly dreamed of by Lenin and other responsible Communists, were quite unable to examine critically the proposals which were put out by the Third International for the conduct of the workers' struggle elsewhere. They erred again and more seriously in assuming that methods which may have been useful and probably inevitable in Czarist Russia could be applied here where almost every condition is different. Underlying Communist doctrines lay the assumption that constitutional action is futile for the Socialist's main aim, that the democratic idea is a myth and a danger, and that capitalism can be overthrown not by the deliberate act of an organised work-

ing class, but only by a minority, the Communist Party. To the superficial observer the condition of Europe at the end of the war and at the beginning of the peace made these assumptions less absurd than they appear now. There were sections of the ruling class which had lost their grip of the situation in face of a war which they began and could not control, and in face of peace problems which threatened to be insoluble and fatal. The moment passed and even during capitalism's difficulty, the workers, in spite of equally superficial views to the contrary, were never less ready to act as a class against their exploiters. All that can be said for the Communists is that many of them did believe their desperate creed. They were prepared to pit their puny strength against the might of the capitalist state, to have their own and other people's heads broken in trying conclusions with the armed forces, to go to jail for defiance of capitalist laws and in general to face the consequences of their own foolhardy actions. Not so our present-day Communists. The violent doctrines of 1920 will no longer stir even the most emotional and youthful would-be rebel. They are too obviously impracticable to stand the test of discussion in the light of the present situation. But while they dare not go on preaching civil war they are not prepared to admit their error. Instead, they now ask us to believe that they are the innocent victims of wicked misrepresentation, and that they never believed these doctrines at all. Accordingly we give below a selection from the host of declarations they now want to be forgotten, prefaced by their recent repudiation of their original policies.

The Communist Party has repeatedly pointed out that unless it is able to win over to its standard a decisive majority of the working class it cannot realise the social transformation. The Communist Party believes that without the activity of a majority of the workers both in the struggle to set up a real Workers' Government, and in the subsequent Socialist reconstruction, emancipation is impossible. —(Editor, *Workers' Weekly*, November 7th, 1924.)

Lenin writing on Bourgeois Parliamentarism versus Proletarian Revolution (*Workers' Dreadnought*, August 28th, 1920) used the following words:—The accusations of siding with the Bourgeoisie can indeed be levelled at all . . . who, while proclaiming adherence to the dictatorship of the proletariat in words, in deeds propagate the belief in the necessity of gaining under the capitalist régime the formal consent of the majority of the population (that is a majority of the votes in a bourgeois parliament) before political power can

be transferred to the proletariat . . . Let the revolutionary proletariat first overthrow the bourgeoisie, throw off the yoke of capitalism . . . and then it will be in a position to gain the support of the non-proletarian working masses.

Lenin here uses "proletarian" to mean only the class-conscious minority, not the whole of the working class, as is shown by his following remark that "economically and politically it (the proletariat) represents the true interest of the vast majority of the workers."

Eden and Cedar Paul, two members of the C.P.G.B., in their pamphlet "Communism" (Labour Publishing Co., 1920, p. 12), wrote—"the Bolsheviks believed in the concentration of revolutionary energy in the hands of a comparatively small group prepared to seize power and declare the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . The dictatorship will not be exercised here, any more than it has been exercised in Russia, by the masses. It will be exercised by an oligarchy by a revolutionary élite."

Lenin, speaking at a Peasants' Congress ("Ten Days that Shook the World," p. 303), is reported by John Reed as saying: "If Socialism can only be realised when the intellectual development of all the people permits it, then we shall not see Socialism for at least 500 years."

Karl Radek ("The Development of Socialism from Science to Practice") describes "the notion that the proletariat should undertake no revolution until it is satisfied it has the majority of the people at its back," as "nonsense."

Bela Kun ("Liberator," March, 1920), declared in an interview that "only a small part of the Hungarian workers were Bolshevik . . . But the most effective means of revolutionising the masses . . . is revolution."

Clara Zetkin, speaking for the Third International at the Berlin meeting of the three Internationals in April, 1922, declared that "The new political organism cannot at first be broad-based upon the people's will . . . The revolutionary élite wrests the powers of the State from the grip of the capitalist class, and establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat." (Official Report, p. 15, Labour Publishing Co. Ltd)

The Thesis of the Third International on "Parliamentarism, etc.," adopted at the Moscow Congress, 1920 (C.P.G.B., p. 4),

"repudiates the possibility of winning over parliament." "The Statutes and Conditions of Affiliation" (C.P.G.B., page 4) declares that "the aim of the Communist International is to organise an armed struggle for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie . . ."

The "Workers' Republic" (Communist Party of Ireland, April 7th, 1923) states that "the advanced workers, organised in a Communist Party . . . will put the capitalist class out of existence by handing back to the workers that which has been filched from them."

So much for the Communists' repudiation of minority action and the armed revolt against the capitalist class. They have changed their watchwords because the old ones were growing ever more unpopular and absurd, but they have failed to see where they have drifted.

In 1920 they were sharply differentiated from other so-called working class parties, but this distinguishing feature removed, they fall back where they truly belong, into the ranks of the reformists. With their long and continually changing list of "Immediate demands," ranging from capitalist measures like nationalisation to the dissolution of the British Empire, both of them a recognised part of the stock-in-trade of the Labour quack in the 'eighties, they will have difficulty in showing any reason for their separation from the I.L.P. and the Labour Party. They have demonstrated that Communist theory is barren of hope for the working class.

"Nature exists independently of all philosophies. It is the foundation upon which we, ourselves products of nature, are built. Outside man and nature nothing exists, and the higher beings which our religious phantasies have created are only the fantastic reflections of our individuality."

—F. Engels.

\* \* \*

"Men make their own history in that each follows his own desired ends independent of results, and the results of these many wills acting in different directions and their manifold effects upon the world constitute history. It depends, therefore, upon what the great majority of individuals intend."

—F. Engels' "Feurbach."



## A LOOK ROUND.

## THE L.S.D. OF CAPITALIST REMEMBRANCE.

What slimy hypocrites are the ruling class of to-day. Every opportunity is seized upon to pour out tears of sympathy for their victims, when the process is not a costly one; but let it mean dipping into the merest portion of their wealth and, what a difference. Armistice Day is one of those occasions when our masters launch upon us a flood of nauseating cant. It is, we are told, in remembrance of our "glorious dead," but compare such pretended capitalist sympathy with the treatment meted out to the workers at all times. It would indeed be surprising were it otherwise.

At the present time there are 800,000 ex-Service men unemployed, of whom 300,000 are young men not much over 30 years of age, who gave their best years to serve their country.—*Daily Chronicle*, 16/9/24.

In like manner their wartime heroes are left to die in want; same paper says (25/10/24):—

Thomas Whitham, V.C., who won the honour when a private in the Coldstream Guards during the war, died of peritonitis at Oldham Royal Infirmary yesterday. Mr. Whitham, who leaves a widow and six children, had been out of work and had had to raise money on his medal.

The following is also a specimen of our kind masters' gratitude:—

Wages of workmen in the Manchester Corporation Gas Mains Department were yesterday found to be 2s. 3d. short . . . the explanation given was that the sum represented two hours' stoppage for Armistice Morning. Six hundred workers, all ex-Service Men, are affected.—*Ibid.*, 15/11/24.

Well might the workers remember their masters' recruiting appeals: "Isn't this worth fighting for?" "What will you lack sonny?" May they remember that it was the Labour Party that rendered such able assistance in such appeals. Likewise that it was the same Labour Party that was prepared to use the masters' military legions as strike breakers when you were fighting to maintain your standard of living during their term of office.

\* \* \* \*

## CAPITAL NONSENSE.

An applicant at Greenwich County Court said that his landlord, who was a "great Socialist," refused to accept rent from him. Whereupon the oracle of justice, dip-

ping deep into his reservoir of wisdom, delivered himself of the following:—

Probably then he doesn't want the rent. A Socialist I believe is a person who has no objection to accumulating Capital on his own account, but denies the right of other people to do so.—*Star*, 4/10/24.

Let us reason! A capitalist is one who owns wealth in the form of capital: A Socialist is a member of the working class who realises his slave position and works for Socialism. Like the rest of the workers he is poor. It is his class whose wage labour applied to nature's minerals provides all the wealth which the capitalist class dissipate in luxury, spend on wars, armies, navies, etc., or accumulate in the form of capital in order to further exploit the workers for profit. Wage slavery never permits of more than a continued poverty existence. The workers' accumulation is one of misery and insecurity. The Socialist doesn't deny the "right" of the capitalist to possess capital because he knows that "right" is backed up by the political control of the armed forces. What the Beak calls "right" is called by the Socialist "might." When the workers organise to control that same might the masters will be welcome to the right. We stand for the common ownership of the earth and its control by the whole people, i.e., the abolition of capitalism and its corollary capital.

\* \* \*

## THE MEANING OF POPLARISM.

We have never doubted the sincerity of George Lansbury's actions in the interests of—George Lansbury. Through the columns of the "Daily Herald," 8/11/24, he puts forth an admixture of "Jesus," "What I Think," and spurious economics. Says he:—

All who possess health and strength should be only too glad to help maintain those unable because of disability to do a full week's work for a full week's wage.

Quite a common mis-statement dear to the Labour Party confusionist, plus the sentiment which is such an asset to Lansbury. He knows that the wages the workers receive hover round a bare cost of living basis, which only suffices to replenish their energy. In the "Herald," 17/3/24, he wrote of "thousands of miners whose wages had sunk below subsistence level," presumably by short working time, which

had to be supplemented by Poor Law Relief. That section therefore of the working class not required by the masters, either because they are physical wrecks or those whom it is unprofitable to employ, must be maintained in some sort of condition by the capitalists who own the mass of the wealth, which constitutes the proceeds of the robbery of the working class. Dare Lansbury deny that? Obviously the masters wish to keep their expenses (rates and taxes) as low as possible, for they come out of their profits. This is where the Labour leader renders assistance, first by endeavouring to disguise the process of working class exploitation, and second by trying to convince the workers that the masters' rates and taxes concern them in order to keep them as low as possible. Proof:—

The larger Poplar ratepayers who squeal so much about the rates have therefore on the balance been saved at least £250,000 yearly as a result of the Poplar Labour Movement during the last four years.—*Poor Law Officers Journal*, quoted *Labour Leader*, 6/3/24.

The "larger" ratepayers ought, therefore, to be grateful for they pocket an extra million in profit. Those who confuse the workers, knowingly or otherwise, are the best friends of the capitalist, and will merit their appreciation despite the pretence of their opposition. It is clear that it doesn't matter whose the votes are, because—

As your member in the last two parliaments, I desire to thank both friends and opponents for the loyal support which they have given me during that period.—Lansbury Election Address, October 24th.

—As Socialists we know we will meet with bitter opposition from our opponents (Labourites included): It is significant that while it took us six years to rake up £1,000 the I.L.P. Election Fund contained anonymous £500's and £1,000's, and one large employer of labour, Mr. Bernard Barron, while deploring the defeat of the Labour Government could contribute to the Labour Party funds, £5,000 in one gift. ("Chronicle," 13/10/24.)

\* \* \*

## YOUR WORK AND THEIR PROFIT.

"Business Organisation" is a magazine devoted to devices and schemes for extracting the maximum amount of energy from the workers, with the minimum cost. It claims to be disinterested in politics, save in so far as they "check trade and hamper

the efforts of our readers to find work for labour and make profit for themselves." (October.) Eager to obtain insight into this divine arrangement, we read on, and learn of the great Woolworth: "The thought occurred to him that in future he would pay others to work for him, and so large did his business grow that he had never even entered some of his stores." Another gentleman who also discovered the trick of how to find work—for others—was Mr. Selfridge; he embarked on a world tour a few months ago, "just to show he isn't indispensable in the business" (*Ibid.*). The above instances apply equally to the capitalists as a whole. When the workers no longer consider it a privilege to be allowed to fashion a world of pleasure for others, that pleasant world can be theirs.

MAC.

## THE CLASS WAR.

## AND THE FACTS BEHIND IT.

Mr. J. H. Thomas recently said that the "talk about a class war left him cold." In a leading article, 14/11/24, the "New Leader," while agreeing with him in "denouncing class hatred," says:—

But we think it almost the gravest mistake which a Labour Party could make to ignore the fact that a process which is usually called the Class struggle is the most vital fact of our lives.

According to the "Daily Chronicle," 15/11/24, Mr. C. G. Ammon "remarked that they all agreed that, so far as possible, they were not desirous of carrying on a class war. . . They must admit that the class war was with us."

From the same source we get the following: "Dr. Salter, M.P., also declared that class war was a fact. It was a struggle between the people



day picture paper "No more class war" proves or disproves the existence of that struggle. The class struggle and its growing intensity is the one outstanding feature of modern times. The pathetic denials of capitalist agents like Mr. Lovat Fraser deceive no one, except those who want to be deceived. The facts are patent to anyone capable of observation and thought. Millions of workers organised on the industrial field to defend themselves against the constant efforts of still more strongly organised employers to reduce their standard of living and bind them more completely to the wheels of industry.

Modern society is split clean across by the antagonism between those who produce wealth but do not own it, and those who own wealth though never assisting in its production. Disputes follow one another in rapid succession over the whole field of industry between the class that owns and controls the means of wealth-production and those who own nothing but their energy.

It is in this last elementary fact that the germ of the class struggle lies. Unable to obtain access to the means of life, the propertyless human being is compelled to sell his energy to those who own. He becomes a wage-slave and must bargain with the capitalist for a wage that will satisfy his wants. As the number of workers seeking to sell their energy is nearly always in excess of the demand, bargaining power is on the side of the buyers, or masters. It is a simple business axiom that when a commodity is plentiful it is generally cheap. But cheap labour-power means a low standard of living, and the owner of labour-power being human and more or less intelligent resents being thrust ever more deeply into poverty; while at the same time those who cut down his rations make huge additions to their bank balances and finding that markets have somehow become glutted, stop production for a time and turn their workers on the streets. Slow starvation on the dole for a time and then, back in the factory to repeat the process with, possibly, a lower wage and managers and overseers hustling and driving with feverish haste that they may be first with their goods on the awakening market.

On the one hand a super-abundance of wealth. On the other poverty to the verge of desperation. Whether they do little or

nothing, those who own the means of life increase their wealth daily beyond their power to spend it. The propertyless wage-slaves are driven by the fear of the sack, and the more they yield the poorer they become.

The capitalist increases his wealth by machinery and methods that enables one worker to do the work of many and then reduces that worker's wages. He does nothing to assist production, but his overseers—themselves urged on by fear of the sack—in his interest, are constantly sacking and speeding up and reducing wages. This is the class war, waged from the employers' side and accompanied by an avalanche of propaganda that attempts to reconcile these conflicting interests.

But the antagonism cannot be hidden. It cannot be smoothed away by patriotic blather or glib phrases about the indivisible interests of employer and employed. Whether they want to "carry on a class war" or not the workers are compelled to fight back. Whether they understand how to carry the fight to a successful issue or not millions all over the world realise that it is necessary to organise against the capitalist class.

The knowledge that should go with that realisation awaits them in Socialism. Let them acquire it and, instead of being always the victims of capitalist aggression they will fight back on an equal footing. There is a class war; consciously fought on one side, it is true. Talk of it may leave Mr. Thomas cold, and Mr. Ammon may not be desirous of carrying it on, but the "New Leader" is right for once when it says that it is the most vital fact of our lives; however much they may qualify it next time the Labour Party takes office.

F. F.

### STUDY MARX.

A

## Central Economic Class

is being held at

17, MOUNT PLEASANT, W.C.1.,

Every Thursday Evening, at 8 p.m.

All Workers Invited!

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### SOCIALIST POLICY.

#### ANSWER TO F. L. REMINGTON.

(1) Your remarks on municipal action have already been dealt with in the answer given in the October issue of the *Socialist Standard*. Until you can bring some arguments against our reply your unsupported assertions are worthless expressions of opinions.

(2) To say "the Socialist Party of Great Britain accepts the structure of the working classes (sic) existent industrial machinery in the shape of Trades Unions" (a very verbose phrase which simply means "the S.P.B.G. accepts Trades Unions") shows considerable confusion of thought. Practically all who work for a wage have to "accept" Trades Unions where they exist in any strength, whether a member of the S.L.P. or any other Party. It is significant to note that almost every S.L.P.-er that became prominent in the eyes of the public did so by their activities in the Trades Union *not* by any action in industrial unionism or politics. This confusion of thought is further emphasised by your two statements (a) "the S.L.P. endorses industrial unionism"; (b) "the S.L.P. is a political party just as much as is the S.P.G.B."

As industrial unionism denies political action for the working class your remark proves the S.L.P. to be an *anti*-political party. The whole question of "industrial unionism versus Socialism" has been debated and dealt with in various back numbers of the "S.S." which we recommend to your notice.

Another error in your letter is in passing over lightly the matter of "imposing personalities." Had you read our exposure of the S.L.P. in our manifesto and in various articles in the "S.S." from August, 1906 onwards, you would have seen that "leaders" with a sheep-like following existed in the S.L.P. since its inception. This was one of the factors that prevented those in England who were fighting the old S.D.F. policy from taking part in the formation of the S.L.P.

(3) It can only be supposed that if you have read the answer to your query on the oath, you have not paid the slightest atten-

tion to its contents. You make no attempt to show *how* the working class can gain control of political power if they baulk at an oath. In fact all your present assertions were met in that reply.—Ed. Com.

\* \* \*

#### REPLY TO G. T. FOSTER.

It is significant that while questioning the definition of Mind given in the article entitled "A Brief Sketch of the Materialist Conception of History," you fail to give any alternative explanation.

Your statement that "the brain itself is ONLY an idea," given without the slightest attempt to supply any evidence or reason to support it, is sheer nonsense.

Another unsupported assertion, namely, "We know ONLY modes of our own consciousness" is self-contradictory. Who or what are the "we" that know?

When you can give any evidence for your entirely baseless assertions, it may be worth while to examine such evidence.—Ed. Com.

\* \* \*

#### REPLY TO J. JACOBS (Edmonton, Alberta).

Your references to the political antics of the Communists in Canada are noted. Their posing as Labour candidates with a long reform programme of a capitalist nature is very similar to the gymnastics of Communists here. Communists in Canada, once so strenuous for the One Big Union and now shouting back to the American Federation of Labour simply show that they are out to capture the jobs in unions as well as in Labour Parties.

When the working class understands the class struggle it will realise the futility of Communist "Moscow" tactics and the anti-revolutionary character of these so-called Communist opportunists.—Ed. Com.

### LEYTON BRANCH.

## A LECTURE

ON

## "The Socialist Party, Its Aim and Methods,"

will be given at

Trades Hall, Grove House,  
HIGH ROAD, LEYTON,

On Sunday, December 7th, at 7.30 p.m.

Lecturer - A. KOHN.

Questions and Discussion Admission Free.



## A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

(Continued from November Issue.)

Since the whole history of the State shows that the ruling class of any given period use the State machinery as a means of safeguarding their material interests, to the detriment of the subject class, the struggle of the classes necessarily takes the form of a political struggle—a struggle for the control of the means of life through the control of the State. Only by this means is a ruling class to be dislodged from power, and a new form of society established. Revolution, then, in a society comprising different classes, is an essential part of the process of social change; it is inevitably implied in the evolution of the tools of wealth production and distribution, and the need for revolution arises when a certain stage in economic development is reached. The revolution has to be carried out by the rising subject class in order that old and obsolete social institutions which do not conform to the requirements of that class may be destroyed.

It will be gathered from what we have said that the class struggle has a materialistic basis. But this is often obscured in great historical events by the "idealism" displayed in the struggles. The abstract ideas of justice, freedom, humanity, etc., have at all times been invoked as weapons in the struggles. So much so, in fact, that many who have looked back upon past history have regarded the "idealism" as though it were independent of material causes. There could be no greater mistake. To take the French Revolution of 1789 as an example. That revolution was in reality the result of a struggle between the ruling feudal nobility and clergy and the then rising capitalist class. In that struggle for power the rising capitalist class, who saw in the domination of the nobility the means of hindering their advancement, found it necessary to seek the support of the peasants and propertyless workers of France. All sorts of promises were made to obtain that support. Since the peasants and workers were likewise groaning under the tyranny of feudal rule, the promises made, together with the great rallying cry of the bourgeoisie for "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," met with response from the

"lower orders." But the slogan of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" turned out to be no more than a reflection of the desired political and social rights of the bourgeoisie. As far as the peasants and proletarians were concerned, they had merely assisted in substituting one set of rulers for another.

So we could continue, in speaking of other revolutions, to point out that, although disguised by religious or secular idealism, the struggles have been between classes for social supremacy. Whilst the class struggles of the past have resulted in the overthrow of one class by another, and thus class society has been perpetuated, the modern class struggle must of necessity end in the abolition of classes. Social development has so simplified the class divisions in modern society that now only two classes face each other in society, with only one class needing emancipation—the working class. With the triumph of the working class, the slave class of to-day, society will witness the winding up of class society and human slavery.

Let us now sum up our sketch of that theory of history formulated by Marx, Engels, and Morgan. We have seen that the materialist conception of history regards the changes that have taken place in the forms of Society as being mainly caused by the changes in the means of wealth production and distribution. Or as Morgan would say, the upward march of mankind is largely to be explained by "their successive arts of subsistence."

We have also seen that these economic changes, though brought into existence by man himself acting upon his natural surroundings, so alter the conditions of human existence, that mankind are more or less compelled to shape their mode of living accordingly. Further, we have pointed out that our view of historical development is not so one-sided as to exclude from human history every other factor than the economic one. Man's ideas and ideals, his geographical and climatic conditions, are all embraced by our conception of history, and placed in their true position. The influence of ideas in historical development has engaged most of our attention in this sketch, for the reason that, it is upon that side of our theory that most criticism has been levelled. Since the influence of geography,

and climate has only been implied by us here and there, it may prove useful if we have a few words to say about these before concluding; if only to show that Marx was not unaware of their influence on human society. Whilst we assert that the economic development is the motive force behind social change we are, at the same time fully aware that geographical and climatic conditions form part of the background, so to speak through which many of man's technical inventions have taken form. Thus the needs for making fire, clothes and shelter must have arisen when our primitive ancestors emerged from the tropical or sub-tropical forests on to the open plains, where they were more at the mercy of climatic conditions. Hence the invention of the crude technical appliances of that time to overcome the climatic conditions. But even when we reach more modern times, when man had enormously increased his hold upon natural forces, we observe the influence of geography and climate. In dealing with the question of the physical conditions more or less essential to the capitalist form of society in its early stages, Marx, in the following lengthy but luminous passage, says:—

Capitalist production once assumed, then, all other circumstances remaining the same, and given the length of the working day, the quantity of surplus-labour will vary with the physical conditions of labour, especially with the fertility of the soil. But it by no means follows from this that the most fruitful soil is the most fitted for the growth of the capitalist mode of production. This mode is based on the dominion of man over Nature. Where Nature is too lavish, she "keeps him in hand, like a child in leading-strings." She does not impose upon him any necessity to develop himself. It is not the Tropics with their luxuriant vegetation, but the temperate zone, that is the mother country of capital. It is not the mere fertility of the soil, but the differentiation of the soil, the variety of its natural products, the changes of the seasons, which form the physical basis for the social division of labour, and which by changes in the natural surroundings, spur man on to the multiplication of his wants, his capabilities, his means and modes of labour. ("Capital," Vol. 1, page 522.)

However, as previously indicated, the influence of geography and climate, important as they are in the study of the make up of human society, recedes in importance as economic development advances.

(To be continued.)

## PUT THIS IN YOUR COLLECTION OF GOLDEN DEEDS.

You will of course have the Boudel Massacre, the Amritsar Horror, the Congo Rubber Atrocities, etc., duly docketed. The following extract from Mark Twain's recently published Autobiography, quoted in the "Daily News," October 25th, is a useful addition to Capitalism's Book of Golden Deeds.

Mark Twain was roused to a white heat of anger by the killing of six hundred Maros by American soldiers in the Philippine Islands in 1906.

"With six hundred engaged on each side, we lost fifteen men killed outright and we had thirty-two wounded. . . . The enemy numbered six hundred—including women and children—and we abolished them utterly leaving not even a baby alive to cry for its dead mother.

"This is incomparably the greatest victory that was ever achieved by the Christian soldiers of the United States."

President Roosevelt sent a formal message of congratulation to the commanding officer. "His whole utterance is merely a convention," comments Mark Twain. "Not a word of what he said came out of his heart. He knew perfectly well that to pen six hundred helpless and weaponless savages in a hole like rats in a trap and massacre them in detail during a stretch of a day and a half from a safe position on the heights above was no brilliant feat of arms, and would not have been a brilliant feat of arms even if Christian America, represented by its salaried soldiers had shot them down with Bibles and Golden Rules instead of bullets."—From Mark Twain Autobiography extract in "Daily News," 25/10/24.

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:** Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.  
Garnault Place, Clerkenwell, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Dalston, Queen's Road, 8.30 p.m.

**Friday:** Stratford, Water Lane, 8 p.m.  
Tooting, Church Lane, 8 p.m.  
Walthamstow, High Street, (Opposite Batf's), 8 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Leyton, James Lane, nr. Leyton Stn., 7.30 p.m.  
Stoke Newington, West Hackney Church, 8 p.m.



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to L. Vinetsky, 11 Upper Dean-st., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions every Wednesday at 8.45 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Ruthlerglen-rd, Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Communications to the Sec., 78 Greenwood-rd., E.8. Branch meets Fridays, 7.30, at The Arcadians, 42, Amhurst-rd., Hackney Stn.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Mondays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., T. Travis, 27, Arthur Street, Cobridge, Staffs.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 88, Dunedin-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Tuesday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—Sec., A.L. Myerson, 53, Marshall Place, Hightown, Manchester. Branch meets Clarion Café, Market St., 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month, at 8.30 p.m.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 12, High Cross road, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to A. J. Godfrey, 30, Waverley road, Walthamstow, E.17. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Noel Park School; N.22.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.